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THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

New Series, Vol IV, Part I.

May 1938

This Number is dedicated to the memory of
Sj. Gaganendranath Tagore.

The Visva-Bharati Quarterly.

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Self-Portrait *By Gaganendranath Tagore*

THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

May *New Series,* Vol. IV, Part I. 193[illegible]

MEMORIES OF GAGANENDRA NATH TAGORE

The Marquess of Zetland

NOT in India only but in Great Britain also was the news of the death of Si. Gaganendra Nath Tagore received with feelings of deep sorrow, for he possessed a charm of personality which made an immediate and a lasting impression upon all who came in contact with him.

It was in connection with the affairs of the "Indian Society of Oriental Art" that I first met him ; and it was with feelings of keen anticipation that I looked forward to my first contact with him, for I was familiar with the outstanding part which the gifted family of which he was a member had played in two movements of opposite tendencies arising out of the emotional and intellectual ferment which marked the evolution of Bengali Society during the greater part of the nineteenth century. I recalled the part which had been played by Maharshi Devendranath Tagore in the reformist movement which found organised expression in the Brahmo Samaj, the counterpart in India of the protestant secession from the Church of Rome at an earlier epoch of European history. I recalled likewise the part which Rabindranath Tagore had played in the movement away from an excessive deference to the culture of the West and towards a juster appreciation of the literature and art of their own land, a movement which carried with it a hitherto unimagined delight in the possibilities inherent in the Bengali language and the half forgotten art canons of past generations of Indians, of vigorously creative work inspired by their own race-consciousness. The experience fell not one whit short of my expectation of it. From the first I fell a willing victim to the spell which Gaganendranath laid, not of intention but of necessity, upon all who came within the orbit of his personality,

The quiet dignity which sat naturally upon him told of a life spent in an atmosphere of unusual intellectual refinement. I was, indeed, always conscious when in his presence of a suggestion of that sublime peace which radiates from the conventional image of the seated Buddha ; yet there was a dynamic quality also in his make-up, for he possessed an attraction which invited immediate response and which banished those barriers and restraints which so often hamper the relations between people of different race and upbringing. From the day of our first meeting we worked together in the closest harmony for the attainment of the object which we had in view.

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The Indian Society of Oriental Art had been formed in the year 1907 and it was under its auspices that the work of the school of painting, of which Gaganendranath and his brother Abanindranath may be said to have been the founders, was exhibited to the public. But the Society had fallen upon evil days and it was clear that if it was to serve the purpose for which it existed it must have new life breathed into it. It was, therefore, re-established upon a fresh basis. With the aid of a Government grant a studio and lecture hall were secured which provided not only a meeting place for the teachers and pupils of the School, but a focus for the activities of the Society. A series of lectures was planned and the publication of an art journal entitled "Rūpam" was arranged for. With the whole-hearted assistance of Gaganendranath an exhibition of the works of the leading exponents of the School—the Tagore brothers themselves, Nanda Lal Bose, Asit Kumar Haldar, Kshitindra Nath Mazumdar, Surendra Nath Kar, Mukul Chandra Dey amongst others—was held at Government House, Calcutta, in December, 1919, at which an address descriptive of the character and aims of the movement was given by Mr. O. C. Ganguli who had undertaken the editorship of "Rūpam" and who was himself an artist of great talent associated with the movement.

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With his extreme sensitiveness to the beautiful in life Gaganendranath experienced an almost physical distress, I think, when brought into contact with the drab and sordid side of existence associated with modern industrial life in the great cities. One of the most striking pictures in my collection of Bengali paintings is a symbolic scene by his brush entitled "The Coolie's Funeral". A sad procession is seen conveying the corpse of a factory-hand along the street of a great city towards the setting sun. The mourners have emerged from the door-way of a prison-like building above which two circular windows lit up with a fierce glare reflected from the furnace within, give to it the appearance of a monster with bloodshot eyes gorging itself upon the bodies and souls of those who pass within. How different the life at the

family residence of the Tagores in Dwarka Nath Tagore Lane in Calcutta, where on one occasion I was a delighted spectator at a performance by the members of the family and their friends of one of Rabindranath's own fascinating plays : or again at Shanti Niketan—the Abode of Peace—whither six decades or more ago Rabindranath, then a boy of eleven years, had travelled in the company of Maharshi Devendranath Tagore. At the ashram to which I was welcomed by its presiding genius some eighteen years ago I found the ideals of a by-gone age renewed, ideals that have been defined by Rabindranath himself as those of simplicity of life, of clarity of spiritual vision, of purity of heart, of harmony with the universe and of consciousness of the infinite personality in all creation. Great strides have been made since then. On the site of the original ashram have arisen the buildings of Visva-Bharati, the university planned by Rabindranath which welcomes to its portals oriental scholars from the West to share with their hosts the treasures of the learning of the East. It is still pervaded, I have little doubt, by an atmosphere embodying those ideals to perpetuate which it was created, summed up concisely in the teaching of a single sentence of the Taittirīya Upanishad—"From bliss all these are born ; by bliss when born they live ; into bliss they enter at their death." And, ah me ! how often in these days of ceaseless toil beneath the lowering skies of a less hospitable clime, amid wars and the rumours of wars, with the clang of iron upon steel ringing in my ears as in their mad haste to arm the nations rush blindly along their dolorous way, do I recall the gentle spirit of Gaganendranath Tagore, now taken from our midst, so typical in his own mode of existence of the infinite joy of life as I saw it lived amid the shady groves of Santiniketan beneath an azure sky to whose heights rose the music of Vedic hymns chanted in Sanskrit to the glory of the Lord of all.

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Sixteen years have rolled by since I last saw Sj. Gaganendranath Tagore. I have written of him as memory pictures him to me. I knew him at the height of his creative power, and I can imagine only dimly his handsome figure bowed with pain, his supple limbs rendered immobile by the affliction that darkened the later years of his life. It is not in any case of these things that we now think, but rather of his joyous spirit winging its way through realms of light, a prisoner freed from the prison bars. And I cherish the vision of him as I knew him in the heyday of his powers, a vision which remains and which will remain fresh like the fragrance of a new blown flower—a golden and an abiding memory.

GAGANENDRANATH TAGORE

Sir William Rothenstein

It was with deep regret that I read of the passing of Sj. Gaganendranath Tagore. Though twenty-eight years have gone by since I had the privilege of meeting him, the impression he made on me remains fresh and vivid. I came as a stranger to India and at last reaching Jorasanko I was at once welcomed, as an artist by artists ; I was no longer a stranger. For at once I found myself with men whose world was my world, whose reality was my reality. With the generosity of artists, my new friends, Abanindranath and Gaganendranath, made me free of their treasures, their superb collections over which we exchanged enthusiasms.

Such a sensitive mind as Gaganendranath's I had indeed rarely met with, for his mind ranged over every field of culture. Each subject touched on brought from him some quiet comment, showing an unfailing critical discernment. In his own paintings I observed a similar sensitiveness. He had a beautiful touch and a tenderness, a refinement of insight which gave quality to all his handiwork.

I used to arrive at the Tagore house and leave it as though there were an inch of air between my feet and the ground. Where, indeed, could I find such company as I met there ? the two artist brothers and their uncle Rabindranath. These are the precious hours of life, the hours spent with exciting minds, when one's best self, too, is evoked. And now when one of the three noble souls is no more, it is that one I dwell on with grateful affection and see in my mind's eye the shy, kindly figure of Gaganendranath, sitting among his books and paintings and hear his gentle voice interjecting in the conversation some wise comment, beautifully expressed. How many times have I wished myself back again in that atmosphere !

THE GENIUS OF INDIAN SCULPTURE *

Sir William Rothenstein

IT is just twenty-eight years since I listened to an eloquent address on the subject of Indian Art by Sir George Birdwood While Sir George gave full recognition to the beauty of Indian craftsmanship, of which he was an ardent and scholarly interpreter, like John Ruskin, he denied any fine art to India. Times have changed ; there is a growing appreciation of the great contribution India has made to painting and sculpture ; but even today the exalted place given to the art of China and Japan is scarcely extended to Indian art, yet in Hindu sculpture, apart from its spiritual and symbolical character, there are certain plastic qualities, of breadth, volume and poise which seem to me to be unique. Today when sculptors use chisel and mallet in preference to the modelling tool, one may expect a closer understanding of these qualities.

In Sir George Birdwood's day Greek sculpture was looked on as the be-all and end-all of ideal art. Certain aspects of Indian art repelled the Western mind ; the Elephant-headed Gaṇeśa, the many-armed Durgā, the three-headed Brahma, the Monkey-God and the incarnations of Śiva and Vishṇu seemed to outrage all the accepted canons of beauty. Today the art of Greece is still reverenced, but the Greeks, while they showed a rare sense of beauty in their single figures, were less actively creative. Their religious imagination was restricted to the heroic human figure.

No people has been so profusely inventive as the Indian people. Their iconography is, I suppose, the richest, the most exuberant ever evolved from the human brain. They peopled their vast heaven with an incredible number of gods, for all of which they invented forms, attributes and attitudes by which they could be recognised.

There is a tendency to pass too lightly over this prolific creation of forms, of gestures and attitudes perfected by the Indian genius, forms, gestures and attitudes which were adopted and taken over in all their completeness when Buddhism spread to the Far East. Surely this teeming, creative fertility is in itself an astonishing, a supreme achievement, the more so since they showed, in the forms they conceived for their gods, an equally abundant plastic inventiveness.

Much has been written of the spiritual character of Indian art ; a striking quality certainly of the painting and sculpture. A similar spirit is

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* The Sir John Birdwood Lecture, delivered at the Royal Society of Arts, on 25 Feb. 1938.

apparent in the work of early Italian, French and English painters and sculptors ; indeed, alike in Indian and European art, marked spiritual qualities have gone hand in hand with a profound interpretation of form. How far the Indian artist was himself other-worldly no one can know. No more do we know the religious feelings of the monkish illuminators who painted the masterpieces in the book of Kells or the Winchester bible, or the carvers and painters who filled our cathedrals and churches with noble carvings and paintings.

I think too much has been made by students of Indian art of the canons laid down by the Śilpaśāstras. It is doubtful whether literary men understood the artist's mind better in ancient times than they do today. Nor are archbishops or bishops the best judges of religious as differentiated from ecclesiastical craftsmanship. That the priestly authorities thought it essential to lay down rules for artists to follow is in itself significant.

The Indian craftsman shared the faith, common among all artists, that by subjecting his will to the discipline of appearance, something of the unknown reality of which appearance is the symbol may enter into his handiwork. For is not form itself the visible discipline imposed upon the vital energy of matter and spirit by the cosmic laws ?

The Indian craftsman served a long succession of priestly masters, steeped in a complex transcendental ritualism, while at the same time aware of an essential unity, of spirit and of matter.

I hope to show, from the examples on the screen, that however transcendental and cosmic the subject, its formal expression is no less striking. For nowhere have the plastic qualities of the human form, both male and female, been better understood and rendered than by Indian sculptors. These qualities are early apparent in the heavy Mauryan figures, and again in the reliefs at Bharhut and Sanchi. In all these we see the subtle use the Indian carvers made of jewelry and ornament, which in contrast to their rigidity gave a quality of radiant breadth and smooth roundness to the nude form. This sense of the part which jewelled ornamentation can play is apparent in every phase of Indian art, Buddhist, Brahminic and medieval. I have in mind the enthusiasm of Degas and Rodin when I showed them, late in their lives, photographs of the great Mathura figures. Here was an art which was the reverse of spiritual. Never has the radiance, the unity of form, been better expressed in sculpture than in these strangely fascinating, sensual figures. Here indeed one gets the sense of volume, so often referred to by writers on art today, but volume combined with grace.

The early carvings of Bharhut and Sanchi, flatter in relief than the Mathura figures though many of them are, show a similar sense of volume.

Buddhist art was concerned less in its earlier phases with philosophical conceptions than with episodes of the life and legendary existences of the Buddha. But already in Buddhist art appear the Ariel-like Apsaras, at the same time so delicately spiritual and sensuous, which appear throughout Indian art. In the Apsara figures the artist was able to express the grace of the feminine spirit detached from homestead or household. The Apsaras take an equally important place in the Buddhist, Brahminist and Jaina carvings. A conception so racial was not to be changed with the forms of religious dogma.

The figures of the two dryads at Sanchi show a truer relationship to the Greek spirit than any of the Gandhara carvings. And what a superb architectural frame the great Stupa rails and gateways provided for the carvings, which illustrated the Jātaka stories, surely among the most impressive and original conceptions of men. The noble construction of the great rails and gates at Sanchi are well-known, but how many people among the hundreds who pass daily up and down the steps of the British Museum realise that the carvings attached to the walls of the main staircase belong to a similar but still more magnificent ambulatory. I always regret the absence of a plan or drawing to explain the original place and purpose of the Amarāvatī carvings. No wonder people believe Indian sculpture to be over-complicated. The Amarāvatī slabs, like those of Sanchi, were enrichments of an austere construction designed with noble simplicity. Placed close to one another as they are, with no indication of their place in a great architectural scheme, they naturally appear confused. I am surprised that English sculptors have been so little impressed by these roundels. As compositions they show an intensity and passion, more usual in painting than in sculpture, while the forms and poses of individual figures which we usually associate with the modern outlook might have inspired Blake, Degas or Rodin.

The Gandhara carvings, with their marked Hellenistic features, have always attracted and fascinated Western scholars. No wonder; for the penetration of Alexander with his armies into so remote a clime is one of the romances of history. None the less, the Greek spirit was, plastically, far less vital than the indigenous one which, for a time, it overlaid. It is indeed unlikely that the adventurous craftsmen who accompanied the armies were other than pedestrian artists. The best of the Gandhara figures of the Buddha seems dull and lifeless, in spite of the classic features, beside the vigorous representation of the Mathura Buddha.

If the Gupta carvings show less profound sense of form than we see in the figures from Mathura, they have a peculiar refinement. The quiet grace and subtle charm which they gave to the figures, standing or seated,

of the Buddha had a permanent influence on the Buddhist art of Java and the further East. The male torso in the Victoria and Albert Museum is a characteristic example of later Gupta art, and it was the taste and fine workmanship shown in Gupta architectural ornament that made the pillars, capitals and doorways of the caves and temples of Udyagari and elsewhere among the most important monuments in India. After the refined art of the Gupta period, a refinement which often accompanies the later stages of a once powerful movement, there was now to arise, with the return of Brahminism, a vigorous religious impulse, which finally drove Buddhism from the continent of India, to find a permanent refuge in Ceylon and to flourish anew in Java, Cambodia and Angkor.

The story-telling of Sanchi and Bharhut, the subtle and complex spirit of Amarāvatī and Sarnath, are now to give place to a new dynamic conception of the universe. The range and audacity of this movement in sculpture, consequent on the return of the older religion, is astonishing. If ever there was meaning in the legend that images lie hidden in blocks of stone awaiting only the blows of the sculptor's mallet to be set free, then the cave carvings of Elephanta and Ellora show the truest form of sculpture. Not from single blocks of stone or marble, but from solid hillsides complete temples were hewn. Elsewhere, figures have been applied to building. In India the entire fabric, with its halls and courts, its roofs and supporting shafts, its sculptured figures and enrichments, was conceived and produced from the womb of the earth itself. There are many of these rock-hewn temples in India ; not the least impressive is that of Elephanta, close to Bombay. Here is the great brooding Trimurti, one of the masterpieces of Indian art, side by side with the epic figures of Śiva and Vishṇu. Perhaps the most impressive of the traditional figures is that of Śiva, representing the powerful yet disciplined forces of the universe of succeeding creation and of destruction, and, as the divine dancer, symbolising the unending movement of the spheres, surely one of the most powerful conceptions of the human intellect.

Were today a great expressive art within our compass, there could be no fitter interpretation of our present atomic conception of matter and energy than these carvings of Elephanta and Ellora.

The Indian craftsmen served many masters, giving permanent form to what was fluid and transient. The same genius which perfected the rapt contemplative repose of the Buddha also evolved the symbol of perpetual movement. These two inventions, with their many variations, have formed the body and spirit of Far-Eastern art. Not the least original of these forms were conceived when Tantric ideas were giving a new shape to Hinduism. In the medieval temples the Apsaras become so prolific as almost to overwhelm the gods and godesses they serve. To me, the mastery

displayed in these stone carvings which, on account of their number, must have been executed by ordinary craftsmen, is astonishing. In each of these figures, playing in and out of the light and shadow of the mouldings, there is unfailing plastic beauty, a strange, somewhat disquieting sensuous energy and subtlety of movement; while the sense of design and rhythm concentrated in each of the hundreds of figures used to enrich mouldings, plinths, capitals and door-jams in a single temple is unfailing Some of these single figures, with their heavy breasts and swaying hips, delicately poised on slender feet, can be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum. The medieval temples of which they formed a part were designed with noble simplicity, built of ribbed stone-work, beautifully constructed and articulated, not unlike the structure of a corn-cob. With its homogenous carvings, an Indian temple may be likened to a chestnut tree in spring time. So I thought at Bhuvaneswar and Khajraho, where I first saw these temples, covered with the Apsara and other figures, which seemed to make the solid stone-work quiver with their movement, so vigorously alive did they appear.

Nor must I forget the great medieval temple at Konarak, near Puri, with its superbly designed chariot wheels and its groups of figures and animals thrown out like powerful bastions. Some of the subjects carved thereon, as at Khajraho, show marked erotic features. We are told that, to the Hindu mind, the act of union between man and woman symbolises the absorption of man's spirit into the Divine. This erotic element is absent from Western religious art, but is not unknown among the mystical writers. Both in India and in Europe this symbolism comes at a late period, when religious ecstasy was given to extreme expression.

Apart from this erotic tendency, this later Hindu art has much in common with our own medieval sculpture; indeed we ask ourselves too, who were the craftsmen who carved the noble figures at Chartres, and Amiens, and Wells?

Not having visited the South of India, I know Southern Indian sculpture only from photographs. These are impressive indeed, especially those of Māmallapuram. The great rock carving, known as Arjuna's Penance, is to my mind one of the most vital performances ever conceived and carried out by the sculptor's hand and brain. Nor must I forget the exquisite Southern Indian bronzes. Two figures stand out as rare artistic conceptions—the Nataraja and the figure of Sundaramurti Swami. The figure of the Nataraja, with its exquisite poise, representing the ordered movement of the planets, is one of the most satisfying inventions of the Indian genius. There are many examples of this figure, of varying artistic quality, but so perfectly has the conception been developed, each one has its own quality of beauty. Here again, there are some troubled by the Nataraja being four-

armed ; but the four arms add to the sense of rhythm in the delicately poised figure, and in their way are no more unnatural than the convention of the wings we accept in the angels of Christian art. Incidentally, the Indian angels, the apsaras, when shown in flight, are wingless.

The second figure, that of Sundaramurti Swami, an equally triumphant invention, represents a state of ecstasy, again with a beauty of poise which, to my mind, makes it a masterpiece among the many beautiful Southern bronzes. This quality of poise is peculiar to Indian sculpture. I think the reason is largely because the attitudes on which the figures themselves are based are usual ones throughout India. In Farther-Eastern art these attitudes become stiff and hieratic, for the reason that they do not come naturally to the Chinese.

In their secular art we get another kind of grace, natural to the people themselves, exquisitely interpreted.

If I have dealt with a great subject in a summary manner only, I hope others may follow to treat it more fully and more efficiently. My excuse as an unlearned artist merely, is a lifelong enthusiasm for a great artistic culture, which has not received the full recognition which I believe to be its due.

COUSIN GAGANENDRA

Rathindranath Tagore

A RAW youth fresh from a technical college in the corn-belt of the United States, with no pretensions whatever to aesthetic sensibility returns home to an atmosphere of literary and artistic exuberance and is bewildered. He finds there no trace of Bohemian living which might have struck a sympathetic chord in one hardly weaned from his adolescence. Neither is there the garrulity of artistic parlance and irresponsible talk commonly associated with the art-worlds of western capitals with which he is familiar. A strange experience for him to come in intimate contact for the first time with persons, who, while living the normal life of the Indian gentry, were making experiments and creating forms that were destined to work as a tremendous vital force in the new renaissance of Indian art.

It was this supreme indifference to the value of their creative genius which more than anything else surprised me, nurtured as I had been on the pragmatic philosophy of America. Surprise gradually grew into wholesome awe as my feet inevitably led every morning to the verandah where sat cousin Gaganendra and his brothers at work.

To one who had been used for many years to European ideas and customs it was a revelation to be drafted into the coterie of the artist brothers and watch their manner of work and even more their manner of thinking. Where was their studio ? Where were the easels ? Where indeed the north light and all the paraphernalia of artists ? There sat the three brothers, Gaganendra, Samarendra and Abanindra, on three easy chairs in a long verandah facing the south, and there they painted, carried on office work, entertained visitors and held their court in a truly oriental atmosphere of simplicity and repose. It was here that the students came (Abanindranath had already retired from the Art School, but in the East students prefer a master to a school) and sat discussing problems that were worrying their minds or stood behind, silently watching him do his work. Here also came friends of oriental art and art critics to have a look at the latest drawings and paintings. Dealers would bring old miniatures, illuminated manuscripts and other priceless objects of art, not so often for sale, as for expert opinion and valuation. Besides these, there were, of course, a medley of visitors from high officials to petty job seekers and always a group of hangers-on, who fed the company with a constant supply of the latest gossip of the town.

None of these social distractions would disturb their equanimity or interfere with their work. Each of the brothers except Samarendra—no less an artist but too modest to vie with his more gifted brothers—sat there with a long-piped hookah, a bowl of water and a few simple painting materials beside them. It was in these surroundings that I watched in amazement the making of paintings that have since become famous and almost classical as examples of oriental art.

Abanindra had become well-known as an artist before the eldest brother took up the brush. As head of the family, Gaganendra's youth was more occupied in entertaining and fulfilling the multifarious social duties appertaining to such a position in a joint-family of the upper classes in India. His spare time was taken up with photography when it was not requisitioned for dramatic performances. A born actor, he had his part cut out in any new play that was produced in our family. What made him discover his talent as a painter I am not sure—perhaps Kakuzo Okakura and some Japanese artist friends might have inspired him—but about 1910 when I returned home, painting was still only an occasional hobby with him. He had not found his métier yet. My father's "Reminiscences" was being published then in the original Bengali and I was able to persuade Gaganendranath to draw a few illustrations for the book. These are, I believe, the earliest of his drawings to be reproduced.

It was about this time that the Society for Oriental Art was started as a result of the social contacts of Gaganendra with Justice Woodroffe, N. Blount, O. C. Gangoly and others. The annual exhibitions consisted entirely of the prolific productions of the two brothers and just a few selected pieces from the paintings of their favourite pupils, Nandalal Bose, Suren Ganguly, Asit Haldar, Sailen Dey, Kshitin Majumdar and others. These exhibitions were a great feature of the winter season in Calcutta and served a most useful purpose as a cultural and social centre, not only for that city but for the whole country, since people from all over India used to flock at that season to the then Capital. Gaganendranath was the moving spirit behind this organisation and it was the charm of his personality that drew the elite as well as the crowd to the show. In this connection, I should not fail to remember Lord Carmichael and, later on, the Marquess of Zetland (then Lord Ronaldshay), but for whose enlightened enthusiasm for the cause of Indian Art the Oriental Society could hardly have achieved the position it did. They not merely lent their names but also persuaded the Government to loosen its purse-strings in its behalf.

The artist in Gaganendranath was never confined to his brush merely. His was a versatile genius. The family house in which he lived was furnished and decorated by the preceding generation in the usual ugly Victorian style.

Gaganendra remodelled the house and started re-furnishing it. The services of a South Indian carpenter, a master in his craft, were employed to execute the designs made by the artist brothers. The style of indoor decoration invented by Gaganendra became quite the fashion later on in Calcutta. But the acme of their joint efforts was reached in the drawing room—a magnificent example of semi-oriental treatment—decorated with the choicest collection of paintings and Indian artware, a room that has been the envy of connoisseurs from the world over.

The memory of many an unforgettable evening in that room comes back to my mind as I write. There would be a few choice souls reclining in meditative poses on spacious divans, with lights dimmed, listening to the melodious strains of the *Veena*. On such memorable evenings I would sit in an obscure corner and silently watch the company which would consist of such persons as the great traveller and philosopher Count Keyserling, that artist and friend of all artists William Rothenstein, the inimitable Pavlova, the great visionary Kakuzo Okakura, the art critic Ananda Coomaraswamy, the Russian aristocrat and art collector Golubow, the delightful Karpeles sisters, the savant Sylvain Levi, and that lover of art Lord Carmichael. The mention of the last name reminds me of the close friendship that grew between this high official and my cousin Gaganendra. Lord Carmichael, who was for years the Governor of Bengal, left an unfortunate impression in the minds of the people towards the end of his rule by a series of political blunders. But those who, like my artist cousins, came to know him intimately could not help respecting him for his genuine understanding of art and his enthusiasm for the resuscitation of the artistic crafts of Bengal. Bengal cannot but remain grateful to him for helping to revive the Murshidabad silk industry. The Bengal Home Industries Association was established at his suggestion and with the help of Government funds which he placed generously at its disposal. No better person could have been chosen as Secretary to this Association than Gaganendra. The success of the sales depot at Hogg Street for a few years was entirely due to his indefatigable efforts in creating interest for the beautiful handicrafts of Bengal, which were dying out for want of patronage.

During this period Gaganendra used to go up to Darjeeling quite frequently. To these summer visits we owe the magnificent series of Himalayan sketches. The snowy range had a most wonderful fascination for him and his imagination had worked out an upturned face in the skylines of Kanchenjunga which characterise most of the paintings that he did of these majestic peaks. The robe called "boku" was also adapted from the Tibetan, and thereafter became the distinctive dress of the artist brothers as well as of my father. (Experimenting in dress invention runs in the family.)

After some time when I had sufficiently imbibed the artistic atmosphere in which I found myself, my practical bent of mind would not remain contented until I had utilised all the artistic talent going to waste (so it seemed to me at the time, thanks to my American training !) into some sort of an organisation. Thus came into being the Vichitra Club, which many in Calcutta will still remember. My cousins ungrudgingly gave help. The first meeting was held in the "Lalbari" with a very distinguished membership, Dr. Sir Brajendra Nath Seal presiding. Surendranath had prepared the rules of the Club—if a constitution which provided for no membership, no fees, no obligations of any kind, could be said to have any rules. Nandalal Bose had drawn for the club the design of a seal, in which the name "Vichitra" was calligraphed in the shape of a rural cottage. At the end of the meeting my father read from some of his unpublished writings. The gathering dispersed from the hall upstairs only to meet again in the dining room below where a banquet had been prepared. The room was solemnly decorated in red and had the appearance of the interior of a Chinese temple. As long as the Club continued to function these banquets, on each occasion with a different and novel scheme of decoration, remained a conspicuous and attractive feature.

During the nineties Okakura had brought with him on one of his many visits two young artists from Japan. They stayed as the guests of Gaganendra. While they painted, sitting on the ground, with the silk on which they painted spread before them, the whole family watched with amazement their masterly strokes of free-hand drawing and the dexterous use of the brush. One of these is now the famous leader of the Bijuitsen School of Painters, Taikwan. Gaganendra was influenced by the Japanese technique as his early works show. It was this love for Japanese art that many years afterwards induced the Club to bring out again another Japanese artist, Kampo Arai, to open classes under its auspices.

The Vichitra Club had all sorts of activities. During the day it functioned as an art school with studios where the painters, Nandalal Bose, Asit Haldar and Suren Kar worked at their paintings, N. K. Deval modelled figures, Mukul De made etchings, while a few students (my wife Protima was one of the earliest) hovered round them. In the evenings the library would be the main attraction. Once a week the studio would resolve itself into a social club of artists, writers and musicians. And quite frequently there would be dramatic performances or musical soirees. "The Post Office" was one of its most successful productions, with Gaganendra as Madhab, Abanindra as Physician and father himself taking the part of Gaffer. The performance had to be repeated for eleven nights.

Very soon other activities were added. Collections were made of the indigenous artistic crafts of the province. A young man, good for nothing for most purposes but who turned out to be very useful, was sent out on a roaming mission to collect *alpana* designs, specimens of embroidery, pottery and basket work from villages. The *alpana* designs, together with the nursery and *Brata* rhymes that Abanindra knew so well, were afterwards published in a book form.

During this period Gaganendra discovered a new medium for giving expression to his fund of humour and satire in caricatures. The few that found their way into newspapers and magazines established his popularity at once. The demand for reproductions helped to create another department of the Vichitra Club. A second-hand litho press was purchased and the services of an old Mahommedan printer were enlisted. In the morning Gaganendra would paint a caricature, the same afternoon would find him transfer it to some stones and then supervise the printing of the copies. In this way two volumes of reproductions were published which had a good sale.

The Vichitra Club closed its doors when Visva-Bharati began to claim more and more of our interest, and some of the artists, like Asit Kumar Haldar and, afterwards, Nandalal Bose and Surendranath Kar were called to Santiniketan for the organisation of an Art School (now known as the Kalabhavana) there. During the few years that the Vichitra Club flourished it served as an important social, intellectual and artistic centre for Calcutta and contributed largely to the Renaissance in Bengal. It owed everything for its achievements to the three great personalities—my father, Gaganendra and Abanindra. It set a unique example of how the combined efforts of a few men of genius can set tremendous creative forces at work in a society. I have mainly dwelt on its achievements in the art world as I cannot help thinking chiefly of Gaganendra at the present moment. But its contribution to literature was no less. In its weekly gatherings could be counted almost all the literary people worth mentioning at that time in Bengal. All important writings from the pen of my father, Sarat Chatterji, Pramatha Chaudhury and others would be read out here. The "Sabuj Patra" movement, with its advocacy of getting rid of the Sanskrit influence and adopting a purer form of the Bengali language, may be said to have its birth in the Vichitra.

Although the removal to Santiniketan broke my intimate contact with Gaganendranath after the Vichitra period, I was able to keep in touch with the development of his versatile talents that were ever discovering new modes of expression. In fact, ever since my return from America I have watched with wonder and joy the various stages which marked his artistic career,

the many daring experiments and innovations for which his genius was responsible,—the period of Japanese influence and of the exquisite gold backgrounds ; of the water-colour paintings of Rural Bengal and of Puri ; of the Himalayan sketches ; of the brilliant series depicting the life of Sree Chaitanya ; of the caricatures of Indian life ; and of the very original experiments in cubism.

Not being an artist I dare not even try to evaluate the artist in Gaganendra : for me he will ever remain great even as a man—the generous, the perfectly courteous, the cheerful and sympathetic cousin that he ever was.

ENTER MR. ELIOT

Amiya Chakravarty M.A., D.Phil. (Oxon.)

THE dreamland atmosphere of Symbolist poetry had suddenly become heavy with shadows. It is as if the Lady of Shalott, forgetting her magic vow, had gone to the window and looked at life. The mirror cracked and an unreal existence in the tower was shattered into fragments ; but there was a beauty in the dying song of Symbolism.

The newcomers on the road to Camelot proudly declared their brigandage. on the lips of the Imagists were words as far removed from Sir Lancelot's lisping numbers as any shouts could be. The breaking of the Imagist storm coincided with the Great War ; but it passed away sooner. Mr. Eliot's poetry of the first period depicts a mind paralysed by the impact of events ; the fall of the Ivory Tower, the riot of Images, and the crude entrance of the world into his Bohemia, had upset his neatly arranged traditions. His poems show how uncomfortable existence had become in the finest drawing-rooms and studios. The general disaster in Europe overwhelmed his imagination. His early poetry, indeed all that he wrote up to *Ash Wednesday*, was affected by the "misère psychologique" [1] of the period ; his death-haunted imagination saw human beings as bones, the contemporary scene as a Wasteland. a rocky barrenness, and nothing but a miracle, a sudden shower from above could save humanity. An oppressive consciousness of the Past, a cosmopolitan awareness of the Present and always a fretting with Time, with problems of will, and the futility of mere existence and death, are to be found in his poetry.

The *Hugh Mauberley* and the *Canto* experiments of Pound, with their historical sense, fluent quotations and speech-rhythms, as Mr. Eliot himself has acknowledged, [2] played an important rôle in Eliot's poetry : he also borrowed, being a cultured American, from various literatures of Europe, chiefly French. But Mr. Eliot followed warily in the footsteps of his colleague. While Pound was filling his verses with Continental luggage labels, Eliot was developing a more careful allusiveness ; in his *Wasteland* the imagist mixtures (if Pound's *Cantos* can be called a development of the Imagist "association") are used as cementing material to hold together large chunks of Symbolist imagery and Metaphysical preoccupation. The

1. Freud describes this group phenomenon in his "*Civilisation & Its Discontents* (p. 14).

2. Mainly in his introduction to *Poems* by Ezra Pound (Faber & Faber).

Symbolist element in Mr. Eliot's poetry has been admirably dealt with by Mr. Edmund Wilson in his *Axel's Castle* ; the deliberate patch-work composition, with all its references to pre-historic rites, burial customs, Tarot pack of cards, etc., and its whimsical literary references, has also been more than exhaustively analysed by Mr. Eliot's admirers.[1] His concern with Will, purpose and thoughts on Time and the ultimate salvation, however, can be dealt with here as the pivot on which Mr. Eliot's productions turn.

"Historicity," a quality held up for admiration in Mr. Eliot's prose, has in his poems little significance. Human Time in Mr. Eliot's poetry means merely a continuity where only shadows move and the Will never acts ; in Eternal Time which is apparently quite different from ours, and can only come when death-in-life (or life-in-death) is done away with, freedom may be won from this coil of futility. Man's consciousness in this world of Time struggles vainly ; the barriers within and without are too great ; there is a central paralysis in human existence. Unending hesitation is therefore the burden of his modernist song ; in his *Prufrock* the hero's terrible problem is how to do even the simplest thing, to speak the simplest word, to force any moment to its crisis. Prufrock's Time is eternal indecision, and he worries about it all the time, chiefly at tea-parties and during light conversations :

> "Time for you and time for me,
> And time yet for a hundred indecisions
> And for a hundred visions and revisions,
> Before the taking of a toast and tea" ;
>
> (*Prufrock*)[2]

again, when wavering between several irresolutions, he asks himself

> "Should I, after tea and cakes and ices,
> Have the strength to force the moment to its crisis ?"

But he cannot formulate himself, for, as he points out,

> "When I am formulated, sprawling on a pin,
> When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall,
> Then how should I begin
>
> . . . .
>
> And how should I presume ?"

1. The latest arrival is Mr. Matthiessen's book *The Achievement of Mr. T. S. Eliot* (Oxford, 1935)—an able book, but failing to convince because of its special pleading for even the most far-fetched and tortured excesses in Mr. Eliot's poetry.

2. *Collected Poems 1909-1935*—by T. S. Eliot.

He can only "measure out life with coffee spoons," wait till he grows old, and "wear (his) trousers rolled," stop eating a peach, perhaps, walk on the beach, and do such other things—till, having seen mermaids singing each to each, he hears voices, and is drowned. Salvation in Mr. Eliot's poetry, whether coming as drowning, as rain, as a world ending with a bang,[1] a knock on the door or the sudden self-giving of a martyr, or resignation of officials, invariably results in the total disappearance of the whole process of humanity.[2]

In *The Portrait of a Lady* the hero appears to be in a similar plight ; his Time is composed of moments of vanishing self-possession.

"My self-possession flares up for a second" ;

again,

"My self-possession gutters ; we are really in the dark"

says the hero. So when placed in front of a tea table, he can only try to maintain an amiable futility,

"I smile, of course,
And go on drinking tea . . . "

("the smile falls heavily among the brick-a-brack") ; he does not really exactly smile, but as he points out :

"I feel like one who smiles, and turning shall remark
Suddenly, his expression in a glass".

So he reads the sporting page, glances at the exciting social items, keeps his countenance ; the lady in whose room he is taking his tea and to whom he seems to have had half a mind to propose, is in an identical state of indecision. They decide to leave everything undecided, they turn to Fate, and rather think that they will write, at any rate. He ends by thinking of another smile—this time in connection with the thought of the lady's death, some afternoon ;

"Well ! and what if she should die some afternoon,

. . . . . .

Should die and leave me sitting pen in hand

. . . . . .

Doubtful for a while
No knowing what to feel . . . "

---

1. And also with "a whimper," in *Hollow Men.*

2. In a later section variations to this general rule in Mr. Eliot's poetry will be considered in connection with the *Murder in the Cathedral.*

he continues :

"Now that we talk of dying—and should I have the right
to smile ?"

The accumulation of such material begets a peculiar kind of pathos. The torments of a drifting consciousness become pathological. The paralysis of Will in a social vacuum is painted with realism ; human beings in his *Unreal City* are placed in the same category as streets and lamps and the phenomena of Nature—lifeless but conscious, or about to become conscious. House-maids described as "damp souls sprouting at area gates" are not very different from "the morning" which "comes to consciousness," or

"The conscience of a blackened street
Impatient to assume the world . . . "
(*Preludes*)

—the whole of it is part of the blind Unconscious, the *It* of Hardy, "living and partly living," moving but meaningless. Events are merely

"The . . . masquerades
That time resumes"
(*Preludes*).

In the *Gerontion*, his major poem before *The Wasteland*, is shown the wasteland of the human brain, it is the dry, rocky, half-dead, waiting, remembering, waiting . . . consciousness locked up in the brain of a symbolic old man ; a memory without meaning :

"Here I am, an old man, in a dry month
. . . waiting for rain".

It is consciousness seen as a huge web woven by Time, a mere accretion. History is seen as an immense Past, whose meaning is not known. History

"Gives when our attention is distracted
And what she gives, gives with such supple confusions
That the giving famishes the craving" ;

or History

"Gives too late
What's not believed in, or if still believed,
In memory only,[1] reconsidered passion" ;

---

1. c.f. the words of the Spirit of the Years in *The Dynasts* in which it speaks of the Past "traced thick with teachings glimpsed unheedingly"—
(Part II, Act VI, Scene 7, *The Dynasts*)
mere experience without conviction leading to action makes human history often appear largely as a history of futility.

—that is to say, nothing emerges or develops from the process of History ; only memories are interwoven, passions engendered as before. Sometimes the Past seems to give something, but the hands which would receive it are weak,[1] so that for want of an active consciousness the legacy of Time is again lost. The fate of mere consciousness is that, like Gerontion, it can only die unconcluded :

> "We have not reached conclusion, when I
> Stiffen in a rented house".

These are all "thoughts of a dry brain in a dry season" on which the rain has not fallen ; the Will has not germinated. This utter Will-lessness, this Time-conscious continuity on Earth is shown as an *Egdon Heath* of humanity. Hardy gave a dim stir of life to his Heath ; the wasteland of human society shows no more.[2] In *The Hollow Men* also there is the same picture of diseased Will—

> "Paralysed force, gesture without motion"
> (*Hollow Men*).

It is a sightless world, with shadows interposing between thinking and action, emotion and response, the existence and the essence, etc. The only hope is that this whole affair should end, perhaps "not with a bang but a whimper"—there may be a final sorrow—but nothing short of extinction of this life can restore sight to the blind humanity :

> "Sightless, unless
> The eyes re-appear
> As a perpetual star

---

1. "*Gerontion*", p 38, *Collected Poems 1909—1935*.
2. An American poet wrote about a similar Wasteland in 1913 :

> " . . . Briar and fennel and chincapin,
> And rue and ragweed everywhere . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The field seemed sick as a soul with sin,
> Or dead of an old despair,
> Born of an ancient care . . . "
>
> ("*Wasteland*" by Medison Cawein,
> *Poetry*, Jan. 1913, Chicago).

The same original sin covers Eliot's panorama ; and bones lie scattered as described in this poem—

> "Skeletons gaunt that gnarled the place,
> Twisted and torn they rose—
> . . . The tortured bones of a perished race . . . "
> (Ibid) ;

only in Eliot's *Wasteland* the bones are both dead and alive.

Multi-foliate rose
Of death's twilight kingdom
The hope only
Of empty men."

The shadow, however, is the only real thing in the sightless life of the Hollow Men,—it is the assertion of the existence of some other kingdom. Since the Shadow does intervene between the idea and the reality, there is a promise that the final intervention and redemption will not be long in coming.

The Wasteland is, as his own notes tell us, a picture as seen through the eyes of the blind Tiresias—a composite of man-and-woman. Tiresias, like Gerontion, is merely a flickering consciousness which dimly reveals Past and Present as a continuous twilight. Not only is the present humanity (in other poems, composed of Sweeney, Mr. Appolinax, Grishkin, Doris, Burbank, the Hollow Men and the Empty Men, etc.) shown up as a handful of dust, or a mound of bones, or a procession of shadows, but all humanity of the Past and Present in one country and in another, are, to use Mr. Eliot's favourite metaphor, scraps of paper blown about by blind gusts of Fate. [1] Jerusalem, Athens, Alexandria, Vienna, London, all are unreal; all is barren rock. Whether walking in foreign gardens or in London streets, on bridges or desert tracks, or floating down on boats ; whether automatically happy or functionally sad, men and women are merely shadows on the screen.

In other poems the women who come and go talking of Michael Angelo, or "lonely men in shirt-sleeves, leaning out of windows", are mere dust, "dust of dust".[2] *The Wasteland* is a composite picture of all those other poems (and dust) put together ; here, in some parts, the power with which the "burning", rocky desolation is painted, helps the mind to conceive a vast blind continuity in which things happen and never really are. In Hardy's *The Dynasts* the dark destiny of blind automata are shown in titanic conflict ; here there is a sullen stupor ; instead of the Napoleonic wars and senseless slaughter there is a succession of automatic pictures of humanity equally helpless, will-less, decaying and destructive. The Tyrant of war sits in the citadel of the brain. [3]

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1. "Men and bits of paper, whirled by the cold wind
That blows before and after time"
(*The Wasteland*).

2. In *The Triumphal March.*

3. "We are the sport of those forces which make themselves manifest in mass movements when war is declared . . . under the influence (of "mass psychosis") the individual mind is almost helpless. It is helpless, not so much because of the impact of forces from without, but because there is a betrayer in the inner citadel of the unconscious . . . "
(p. 2, *Psychology & Psychotherapy*" by William Brown, Oxford, 1934).

But out of this the Will has to be born. Till the mercy comes, the thunder clashes and the rain descends, there can only be waiting and a perpetuity of nothingness. At last the terrible "burning" ends ; there is a promise of deliverence, a question is asked "Shall I at last set my lands in order ?" But mere consciousness of purpose, of the need of liberation is not enough ;

> "We think of the key, each in his own prison
> Thinking of the key".

The function of the higher will begins with *giving, sympathising, controlling*. How these higher powers can be released, humanity being as vile and futile as it is in this *Wasteland*, is not explained ; evidently with the falling of the rain there will be a sudden transformation. Then, to change the metaphor, as Mr. Eliot does, life will move into the sea, and with the use of the Will a new voyage will begin :

> "The boat responded
> Gaily, to the hand expert with sail and oar..."; • •

this is possible only because of life

> "Being obedient
> To controlling hands".

The new dynasty has therefore just begun in the *Wasteland*, but as Mr. Forster has pointed out, almost too late.[1] Hardy shows the *process* and evokes feeling ; suffering for him is a sign of developing consciousness, and out of the reactions of Reason, Pity, and the analytical consciousness of Irony, a co-ordination may be possible whereby humanity will extend its dominion over the unconscious—that is the final hope of Compassion. Eliot has expressed his belief more definitely in the release of the human will, to be made possible only by some external act of miracle. As soon as the miracle arrives, however, the necessity for the exertion of the will on earth disappears ; everything is dissolved into nothingness.

In the meanwhile the best that man can do is to be patient ; he will feel

> "The anguish of the marrow
> The ague of the skeleton";[2]

---

1. "The earth is barren, the sea salt, the fertilizing thunderstorm broke too late. And the horror is so intense that the poet has an inhibition and is unable to state it openly

(p. 91, *Essay on T. S. Eliot*, in "*Abinger*" *Harvest*" by E. M. Forster, Arnold, 1936).

2. It continues

> "No contact possible to flesh
> Allayed the fever to the bone"
> (*Whispers of Immortality*).

he will suffer because of *Original Sin*. And he will be irresolute, he will wait. His *Animula* is

> "Irresolute and selfish . . .
> Unable to fare forward or retreat . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Shadow of its own shadows, spectre in its own gloom . . ."

The ladies and gentlemen in *Sweeney Agonistes* prolong their ghostly mirth, not knowing whether they are dead or alive,[1] waiting for the knock on the door. In the *Wasteland*, too, are the multitudes

> "Pressing lidless eyes and waiting for the knock upon the door"
> (line 138, *The Wasteland*).

In *Ash Wednesday* the bones talk to each other—presumably after death—and acknowledge that

> "We did little good to each other",

but they also wait for the divine benediction—to melt away. They wait for the "word"—"but speak the word only" : 'Till then there is endless waiting, and the prayer is,

> "Teach us to care and not to care
> Teach us to sit still".

In *A Song for Simeon* there is a promise of

> "The certain hour of maternal sorrow"

when a new birth will take place for humanity ; till then

> "I am tired with my own life and the lives of those after me,
> I am dying in my own death and the deaths of those after me".

Simeon only wants to depart, having seen the salvation of a Birth. The same idea appears in *Journey of the Magi* ; there is the reality of a Birth but for the others *life* is a Death, and it can only be born by a more real Death. In *Marina* death appears in numerous forms. Those who live in violence, vain glory, false contentment, animal enjoyment, are all merely

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1 This idea occurs as a refrain to Mr. Eliot's song, e. g.

> "And perhaps you're alive
> And perhaps you're dead" (*Sweeney Agonistes*),

also in the same poem

> "Death or life or life or death
> Death is life and life is death";
>
> "I was neither
> Living nor dead" (*The Wasteland*).

The same idea is repeated in other poems, including his recent work *Murder in the Cathedral.*

living a Death-life.[1] In the poem *Triumphal March*[2] men and women march forward ; somewhere, hidden in the figure of mystery, is the meaning of it all. All the others merely raise dust and the noise of traffic ; they shout and babble and speak of "crumpets".

In *The Difficulties of a Statesman* all the statesmen, politicians, committee workers, etc., are asked to

"Resign Resign Resign".

In *Ash Wednesday* the attitude of submission is developed ; there is haunting poetry in it, and the usual variations on the idea of Time, but it is to prayer for termination that the poem *turns*.[3] When it is realised that

"these wings are no longer wings to fly
But merely vans to beat the air
The air which is now thoroughly small and dry
Smaller and dryer than the will"

there is a prayer to the Virgin

"Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death
Pray for us now and at the hour of our death. . . ."

There is an appeal that life, whether contented or not, should terminate :

"Terminate torment
Of love unsatisfied
The greater torment

---

1. "Those who sharpen the tooth of the dog, meaning
Death
Those who glitter with the glory of the humming bird, meaning
Death
Those who sit in the stye of contentment, meaning
Death
Those who suffer the ecstasy of the animals, meaning
Death . ." etc.
(*Marina*).

2. The reiteration of . . .
"Stone, bronze, stone, steel, stone, oak-leaves, horses' heels
Over the paving"
in *Triumphal March* reminds one of Aldington's early experiment in the poem called *Whitechapel* (*Some Imagist Poets, 1915*),

"Noise ;
Iron hoofs, iron wheels, iron din
Of drags and trams and feet passing ;
Iron . . ."

3. Each "*turn*" in the poem is elaborately explained by Mr. Matthiessen ; but the simple meaning of the ascent, with the feelings (and the scenes glimpsed outside as one ascends, described with lyrical beauty) experienced at each stage can be easily understood without theological or abstruse metaphysical explanation.

Of love satisfied
End of the endless
Journey to no end
Conclusion of all that
Is inconclusible. . . ."

The bones lying "in the time of tension between dying and birth" ask that they may bear it all

"Even among these rocks".

The poem ends with the idea of Divine *Will*,

"Our peace in His will".

Belief in the use of the human Will, in some meaning in suffering which may help men here below, is expressed clearly rather late in some of Mr. Eliot's writings. To the working multitude the saviour, the Rock,[1] advocates the need of fashioning their will :

"Make perfect your will," says the Rock,

and again

"Let us therefore make perfect our will.
O God help us".[2]

In *The Rock* there is also for the first time a definite expression of belief in some form of life after the miracle has happened.

"The perpetual struggle of Good and Evil"

is mentioned, and a resolute facing of this struggle is insisted upon. Not only so but the social consciousness, that is to say, the exercise of the Will for changing and bettering the condition of humanity, which is the dominant note in modernist poetry, has for the first time shown its existence in Eliot's poetry in the lines

"What life have you if you have not life together ?
There is no life that is not in community"
(p. 164, *Collected Poems, 1909-1935*).

There is also the promise of

"Work together
A Church for all
And a job for each
Every man to his work"
(p. 160, *Collected Poems, 1909-1935*).

1. The rocky terror of *Wasteland* has been replaced by this *Rock* of assurance.
2. P. 176, "*The Rock*", in *Collected Poems, 1909—1935.*

Having brought Mr. Eliot's poetry to this point of the use of the Will, it would not be inappropriate now to examine the poetry of his contemporaries, Spender, Day Lewis and Auden. In their poetry, it will be seen, almost the whole of the emphasis is placed on the activity of the Will ; it may be said that their work has begun *after* the rain has fallen on the Wasteland, the knock sounded on the door, the miracle happened. . . . They are beginning on a new territory which, in spite of all its diseases, disasters, wrongness and the pressure of false traditions, at least sees a clear reason for using the Will, for bringing the new Dynasts into being.

In the *Murder in the Cathedral*, in which very definitely the actors are not ghosts and the land is not a Wasteland, the development of Mr. Eliot's conception of History, of Time and of Will, has found lucid expression ; in another paper his major work will be examined.

WORSHIPPERS OF BUDDHA

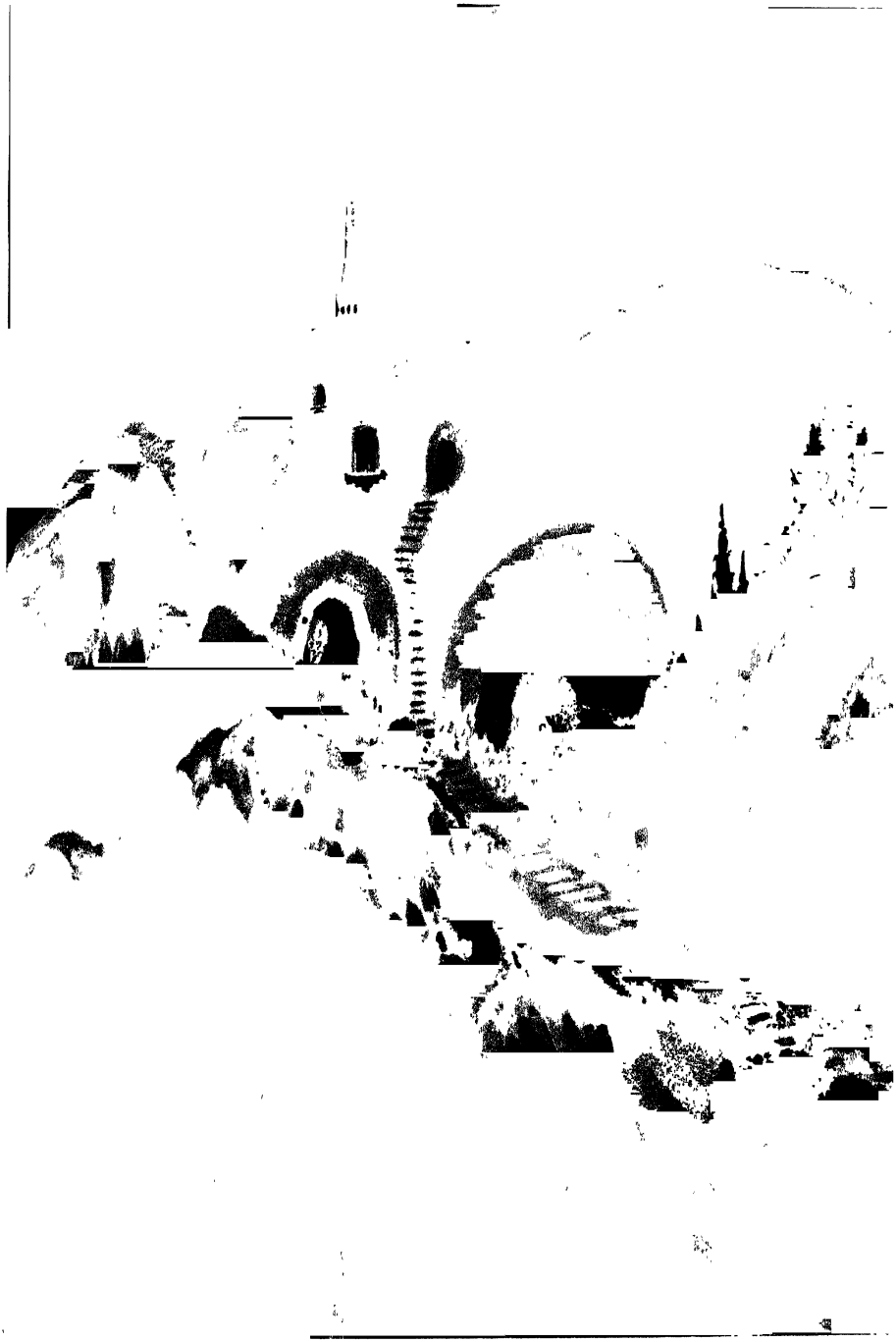
THE war drums are sounded.
Men force their features into frightfulness
and gnash their teeth ;
and before they rush out to gather raw human flesh
for death's larder,
they march to the temple of Buddha, the compassionate,
to claim his blessings,
while loud beats the drum rat-a-tat
and earth trembles.

They pray for success ;
for they must raise weeping and wailing in their wake,
sever ties of love,
plant flags on the ashes of desolated homes,
devastate the centres of culture
and shrines of beauty,
mark red with blood their trail
across green meadows and populous markets,
and so they march to the temple of Buddha, the compassionate,
to claim his blessings,
while loud beats the drum rat-a-tat
and earth trembles.

They will punctuate each thousand of the maimed and killed
with the trumpeting of their triumph,
arouse demon's mirth at the sight of the limbs
torn bleeding from women and children ;
and they pray that they may befog minds with untruths
and poison God's sweet air of breath,
and so they march to the temple of Buddha, the compassionate,
to claim his blessings,
while loud beats the drum rat-a-tat
and earth trembles.

Rabindranath Tagore

Originally written in Bengali on the last day of the year 1937, on reading a report in the papers that the Japanese were praying at the shrines of the Lord Buddha for his blessings in their successful massacre of the innocent Chinese.—Ed.



The Palace of Snow *By Gaganendranath Tag*

By courtesy of Sj. Kanakendranath Tagore

LITERATURE AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

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THIS essay represents an attempt in a new approach to literary matters which until now has been neglected to a considerable extent in schools as well as universities. The few suggestions which we will put forward might stimulate all those who are engaged in the teaching of literature or in literary research.

A few basic facts about our subject may help us to realise its importance. All literary creation depends on two main elements : the personal sensibility of the artist and the social environment in which he works and which either stimulates him or puts obstacles in his way. Both are interdependent and the artist's personal sensibility may be shaped, specially in our own time, by exterior circumstances. This does not mean that circumstances and environment are of greater importance in literary creation than the character, the mentality or the temperament, of the artist himself ; in the case of all great writers we find, for instance, that the exterior forces of their life, the "culture" of their age, have been taken over as a whole into their work, as in Dante, Shakespeare, or Goethe, and that a dynamic interchange of external and internal forces takes place. Literature, therefore, and specially all great literature, is first of all a communication of deep, personal experiences, and we may say that with the changes of the social environment, of culture, from age to age, the mode of communication within a social unit has to undergo changes also. These changes are due to new powerful stimuli of a social kind, such as political, economic, religious, scientific, and all those stimuli connected with the everyday life and habits of the different classes of a social group. The aim of our study, therefore, is to show how literature, that is to say literary theories as well as literary creation, does actually adjust itself to the ever-varying social stimuli from age to age.

We shall have to neglect the artist's personality and temperament for a while. Our first consideration must bear upon the relationship between literary theories, shibboleths of creative effort and the social system as well as the material conditions within a social unit.

We find a sudden outburst of literary and artistic activity in general, whenever there is material prosperity and social stability to be found within a political unit, such as in the Greek commonwealth during the reign of Pericles, in Alexandria after the decay of the Greek empire, in Florence

during the reign of the Medicis, and in England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. In all these instances a leisure class was created, which being free from all material considerations could afford a liberal and benevolent interest in the arts as well as in literature ; it could stimulate the artists and the public alike and open their minds to those artistic or literary conceptions which were representative of their own time and their own class. "Literary theories and concepts, the dicta and shibboleths of creative and critical effort are but the outgrowths of the social system in which they have their being."[1] So, whenever we hear in literary criticism of the "spirit" or the "ideal" of an age, we must be aware of the fact that this ideal is nothing but the expression of a particular social group within the larger geographical unit of a country ; it is always a social and economic entity composed of individuals that carries with it the ideal or spirit of their respective age ; it is a social ideal, properly speaking, before it becomes a literary or artistic one. Its basis is, in any case, material prosperity and a leisure class culture ; it is usually best expressed by those artists who are knowingly or unknowingly in harmony with it. Only those writers who are deeply rooted in the social system of their country—whether belonging to the actually ruling class or not—are fit to give expression to the prevailing "ideal" or "spirit": this is one of the reasons why the so-called "revolutionary" art and literature frequently create the impression of uprootedness, sterility, and helplessness.

If we substitute for the somewhat abstract terms "ideal" and "spirit" the more concrete and intelligible conception of "taste" our point will become clearer. Whenever there is a change in taste, that is to say, in public taste, then we may assume that a change has also taken place in the social system and that under the pressure of economic circumstances one social group has been replaced by another. Later on, literary critics try to justify this change of public taste by an ideology which might appeal to the public of their own time ; one of the famous literary falsifications of this type is to be found in the attempt of literary critics to call all those literary movements or tendencies "classic" which according to them best represent the *national* genius of their country. We have a significant and illuminating example in Germany, where the so-called classicism of Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller was but the result of a struggle for emancipation fought by the middle-class under the influence of the French Revolution and under the pressure of new economic circumstances.[2] And while the ideals and the public taste

1. V. F. Calverton : *The Newer Spirit. A Sociological Criticism of Literature*, 1925, p. 21 *sqq*.

2. see : Franz Mehring : *Die Lessing-Legende*, 1893.

of 18th-century Germany were shaped according to the ideals and taste of a newly created middle-class, in 17th-century France the so-called "classic" ideals were in harmony with the taste of a feudal and aristocratic class.

Whenever in literary criticism, the terms "classic" and "national" are indiscriminately used, they both usually mean the same: it is an attempt to justify by means of an ideology the social ideals prevailing in a particular social group at the time of their origin. In French literature "classicism" is inevitably connected with the social system of a feudal state; in German literature it is related to the struggle of the middle-class for emancipation; in England, similarly to France, it is a feudal state that provides literature with its "classic" ideals. This classic ideal, this taste representative of a ruling social group, had to undergo many changes; in the history of literature we know the most important change under the name of "Romantic revival". This Romantic revival was not brought about by a sudden and unexpected artistic inspiration—as many literary critics still seem to believe—but was due to external forces which made this extraordinary display of artistic forces at the same time and in different countries possible. One reason was the substitution with regard to political life of one class by another; this is particularly visible in 18th-century France, where long before the Revolution the French philosopher and writer Rousseau provided the succeeding generations of artists with the ideals and the artistic taste of a "Romantic revival"; about a hundred years later the same social phenomenon is to be found in Germany and in England, although in England the cultural power of the middle-class which then was already firmly established was only strengthened by the Napoleonic wars and their menace to the national freedom of England. Romantic literature, we find in books dealing with literary criticism, is as "national" as the classical one. And, in fact, it is national, because the ideals and the taste of the new social group have replaced the old and stereotyped classic preconceptions and because in cultural as well as political respect they have been taken over by the whole nation. It is, by the way interesting to observe that whenever one class replaces another in the cultural life of a country, the new class justifies itself and its new political and literary position by a "return to nature", to truth, to realism. All the works of Rousseau in France, the critical attempts of Lessing and Herder in Germany, and Macpherson's Ossian, the Scotch Ballads by Sir W. Scott, and Wordsworth's and Coleridge's "Lyrical Ballads" in England are illuminating instances of that curious phenomenon.

We shall choose one example so as to show how ideals, conceptions and taste change when they are taken over by a new social unit within a state. The word "bourgeois" in literary criticism is generally used to indicate all those writers and artists of the 19th century who by their temperament

were philistines, lacking in all those dynamic qualities which raise the artist above his time. The original sense of this word "bourgeois" in French meant "city-dweller", and only later, in the 18th century, the term came to mean middle-class citizen, as opposed to the non-urban elements, the aristocracy and the peasants. The French Revolution was, properly speaking, a revolution of middle-class citizens, and its victory represented at the same time the victory of middle-class ideals, conceptions and taste, over the aristocratic and classical notions in art. But, strangely enough, after reaching political supremacy in 1830, the middle-class lost all the spirituality attached to it, and the poets of the Romantic Revival all over Europe—although most of them were middle-class citizens themselves—made the word bourgeois a substitute for philistine.[1] The duty of every self-respecting artist was to attack that philistine element in his own country. It is, perhaps, a bitter truth—one which the Greek philosopher Plato realized first of all—that the artist will always first and foremost attack equality whether spiritual, political, or social. This instance shows, I believe, quite clearly how a term of purely social origin and nature may become the battle-cry of a generation of poets. Although this evolution of the word bourgeois is best to be studied in connection with the history of French civilization, we can observe a similar phenomenon in England also. Feudalism in England experienced a more rapid retrogression than in France. The sense of security and protection which prevailed in England throughout the 18th century, an early growing merchant class and with it a rapid growth of towns and commerce, created a powerful middle-class a century before any other country in Europe. So it came about that, while Voltaire in France was still writing his tragedies in the "pure" classical and aristocratic style, we have in England in 1731 the first "bourgeois drama", "The London Merchant" by Lillo, a play that is written for the middle-class and that deals with problems connected with the everyday life of a middle-class citizen. Lillo, by virtue of his origin, was a middle-class citizen himself.

In this connection it is interesting to notice that at the beginning of this middle-class culture in England hardly any distinction was made between a "bourgeois", a middle-class citizen, and a labourer or peasant. In the novels of the great English writer, Fielding, they are still treated equally and as though belonging to the same social group or class. Only in the later half of the 19th century, when through the industrialization and mechanization of labour in Europe, a new change in the social and political structure of countries was necessary, a change took place in the attitude of the middle-class towards the labourer and the peasant. They are treated

1. Albert Guérard : *Literature and Society*. Boston 1935, cf. p. 92*sq*.

with indifference and as though of minor importance altogether. In Walt Whitman we find the first writer of any outstanding merit, who dares to speak of a labourer or a peasant as his brother, as a human being infused with the same elements as a middle-class citizen or an aristocrat.

We have considered until now the relationship between literary theories, shibboleths of creative effort and the social system and material conditions ; our task it will be now to apply these remarks to the personality and the work of the writer himself. And we shall consider them, as we have done until now, in terms of historical and social evolution.

In former times the novelist was free to choose whatever subject he liked. Living at first in a society with an aristocratic ruling class he was attracted by heroic adventures, exploits and mythological tales ; the impossible itself is the subject matter of the *Morte d'Arthur* by Mallory. In Elizabethan times and throughout the 17th century the novelist selected the improbable as the proper theme of his stories ; he was no longer inclined to appeal to the aristocracy alone ; Thomas Nashe's *Unfortunate Traveller* was written for all classes of the country alike, and the improbable most appealed to the reading public of Elizabethan England ; with Sterne, Fielding, Dickens and Thackeray we find, for the first time, the probable in the novel. It is hardly necessary to point out that only the probable could appeal to the middle class of the late 18th and 19th century in England and this explains also the lack of understanding which Victorian critics usually show with regard to the Elizabethan novel. Finally, in the contemporary novel beginning with Thomas Hardy and Josef Conrad and ending with Virginia Woolf, D. H. Lawrence, and James Joyce, the inevitable is represented ; it is the result of the awareness that there is a concatenation of facts, ideas, and actions in modern social life, and that the probabilities of individual experience must be replaced in the modern novel by the hard and inevitable experience of a social group.[1]

The question which we have to ask with regard to this evolution and re-valuation of standards in social life is to determine the writer's attitude to this ever-changing environment. On the one hand it seems desirable that the artist should adjust himself to his environment ; he should, in fact, take roots in the very social group that made his creative activity possible ; on the other hand, however, some amount of maladaptation is desirable also ; the truly great writer not only expresses and reflects the culture of his social group, he also creates a new outlook, a new attitude, a new culture, by opposing himself to existing prejudices, preconceptions, ideas, manners

1. cf. Emmanuel Berl : *Mort de la pensée bourgeoise.* Premier Pamphlet : *La Littérature.* 1929.

and customs.[1] But even in this opposition the artist is in harmony with *one* group of his public, although mostly it is only a minority group. The creation of new standards in political as well as in artistic life always emanates from a minority. In rebelling against the existing standards the politician or the artist is again only the mouth-piece of this minority. It belongs to the masses to make a choice between the rival groups which assume leadership and claim authorship. So, even if we believe that literature be the reflection of "Eternal Beauty", we are hardly able to understand an author rightly without being in touch with his civilization, without realizing that it is always one group within a larger social unit that represents "public taste" and that is responsible for the reputation and success of the writer.

Today, in modern civilization, this problem is more acute than, for instance, in the 19th century. An abyss has been created between the standards of the minority and those of the masses. Those writers who cannot or do not want to adjust themselves to the existing order of things are read only by a very small number of people, whereas all the mediocrities which we find in magazines, reviews, newspapers, and pamphlets are read by everybody. We have not to look very far in order to find the social background for this discrepancy between the standards of a minority and those of the masses. In former times, when a book had been written, it had to be transcribed with infinite difficulty and great expense, the number of copies was naturally very limited, and even these were in constant danger of annihilation. "Fixity" is the keyword for this kind of literature, which was read only by a minority and of which the illiterate masses had not the slightest idea. Today we speak of a "floating literature", its channels of expression are innumerable, beginning with the cheap ephemeral book and ending with the cinema, the radio, and the newspaper. The printing press and with it the publisher become the mouth-piece of "public taste", and in the modern environment of contemporary civilization they decide about the reputation and success of a writer. And they also form, knowingly or unknowingly, the standards of taste, art and culture for the present and the future generations. Here again the social and economic background of the printing-press and the publisher is of some interest to us in our short survey.

Throughout the Middle Ages literature was produced in the same proportion as it was "consumed" by those who could afford the luxury and the leisure of reading it. Literature depended to a considerable extent on the

1. See T. S. Eliot's illuminating criticism of Trotzky's book *Literature and Revolution* and Calverton's "Liberation of American Literature", in *The Criterion*, January 1933, vol. XII, p. 244.

aesthetic judgment of benevolent aristocrats and princes. As the "public taste" of the time was represented by this ruling class, the writer had to conform his views on life to those of his benefactors, in order to earn his living. The reputation and success of his work, therefore, depended on the aesthetic standards and values of a nobleman. This state of affairs can be observed until late in the 18th century.

With the creation of a prosperous commercial middle-class in England, the "reading habit" took hold of a much greater number of people, and the artist no longer depended on the benevolence and aesthetic judgment of the nobleman alone. Then only the aristocrat is replaced by the publisher. At the beginning the publisher was only a "middleman"; he had to ask for subscriptions in order to publish a book; and the most important books in the 18th century were actually published by means of subscriptions, that is to say, the subscribers, the upper middle class, still exercised a certain amount of influence, although indirectly, upon the artist ; in fact, throughout the 18th century the author had to cultivate acquaintance with his benefactors so as to make the publication of his books possible. How ignorant the poet or writer was about his own position within the social group is shown by the fact that Thomas Gray, the author of the "Elegy written in a Country Churchyard" refused the money from his publisher, because he considered it below his dignity to accept any kind of remuneration for his "inventions".

From a very early time the profession of a writer or a poet was treated with contempt. Nothing was considered to be more despisable than to earn one's livelihood by writing books. Apart from the benefactors or subscribers, the great mass of the people never took the poet and the artist in general seriously. In current literature and specially in the novel the poet has no place : until the beginning of the 19th century we do not find a poet as a sympathetic figure in any novel or drama ; the heroes of early novels were courtesans, princes, officers, knights ; in the 18th century sometimes already priests, as in Oliver Goldsmith's novel *The Vicar of Wakefield* ; or they were landowners, lawers, big businessmen, or smart young men, as in Addison and Steele. To represent a poet at this time was quite out of question. Nothing is more representative than the first drama dealing with the life of a writer,— 'Chatterton' by Alfred de Vigny, where the poet is represented as a suffering, depressed, and anaemic young man who commits suicide because nobody understands him. We have to look for the *Wilhem Meister* by Goethe, in order to find a semi-artist in a novel who is at the same time a normal and healthy human being. Another instance of an artist in a 19th-century novel is to be found in *The Newcomes* by Thackeray.

One of the reasons for this singular attitude towards artists is their un-

satisfactory social and economic position within their social group.[1] In modern society, for instance, they hardly ever deal directly with the reading public for which they write. The publisher has become an omnipotent factor in the selection of the right kind of books, in the formation of public taste itself. And it is a bitter truth for every self-respecting writer to know that publishers are guided by material considerations rather than by aesthetic ones. And whenever the aesthetic sense of a publisher comes into play one is forcibly led to doubt whether his choice is the right one. And frequently it can be observed that publishers do not know enough about our civilization to give the public what they *need*. The publisher usually supplies the reading public with that kind of reading matter which they *want*. And as the public is large, growing larger day by day, and accepting indiscriminately the good as well as the bad, showing a particular preference for the bad (for the detective-novel, for instance, because it is cheap and is easy reading), literature should no longer be defined in terms of aesthetic criticism but in terms of book-industry, of production and consumption. If we neglect the personality and sensibility of the artist himself, as we have done throughout this short study, then the history of literature becomes first the history of the charity and aesthetic sense of kings, aristocrats, and noblemen, and then the history of the aesthetic sense and economic considerations of publishers.

In this connection a history of the censorship from Plato to Tolstoy would be most illuminating. Philosophers, religious leaders, and moralists alike frequently considered literature dangerous because appealing too strongly to the senses and inducing excitement of a sensual or erotic kind. The poet was looked upon with suspicion because of "the assumed peril of corruption of the spirit by the incitements of the flesh through beautiful things."[2] In a history of censorship we could also observe how the personal sensibility of the artist opposes itself or is in harmony with its social environment. We could see the writer or poet arising out of a combination of social forces destroying the old and creating new ones.

Lastly, one point more should be mentioned. Social environment as such will never help a student or teacher of literature to understand and appreciate a particular writer or a group of writers. This environment, which we may also call culture, is subject to changes, to slow but dynamic evolution. All those interested in literary matters will be very well aware

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1. L. L. Schücking : *Die Soziologie der literarischen Geschmacksbildung*, 1923, München. (A study on the sociology of the formation of literary taste.)

2. *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, New York, 1935, article : Art : by Irwin Edman, vol. II, p. 223.

of the fact that literature is most responsive to the dynamic of a society in transition. In the 17th century with the metaphysical poets in England, in 18th-century France before the Revolution, and finally in 20th-century Europe, we find such societies in transition. Literature today as it was at the time of Shakespeare and of Voltaire, is irresistibly attracted by the elements of disintegration and construction which lie deeply hidden in the very mentality of our age. And if we speak of disintegration and construction we not only mean the dissolution of pre-established ideas, conceptions and public taste and the construction of a new outlook on life, but also the material and social conditions and circumstances that shape and give life to new intellectual attitudes, to new creative efforts, to a new literature.

AN IMPRECATION

WHEN my mind was released
from the black cavern of oblivion
and woke up into an intolerable surprise,
it found itself at the crater of a volcanic hell-fire
that spouted forth a stifling fume of insult to Man ;
it witnessed the long-drawn suicidal agony of the Time-spirit
passing through convulsions of a monstrous deformity worse
than death.

On its one side a defiant savagery and the growl of homicidal
drunkenness,
on the other, timid powers tied to the load of their carefully
guarded hoardings,
meekly settling down to a silent safety of acquiescence
after miscalculated bursts of impatience.
At the old nations' council chambers
plans and protests are pressed flat between the tight-shut
prudent lips.
In the meanwhile across the sky rush with their blazing blasphemy
the soulless swarms of vulture-machines
carrying their missiles of ravenous passion for human entrails.

Give me power, O awful Judge, sitting on the throne of Eternity,
give me a voice of thunder, that I may hurl imprecation
upon this cannibal whose gruesome hunger
spares neither women nor children,
that my words of reproach may ever rock
upon the heart-throbs of a history humiliated by itself,
till this age choked and chained
finds the bed of its final rest in its ashes.

Rabindranath Tagore

Originally written in Bengali in December 1937, soon after the author's recovery from a serious illness.—Ed.

Mr. Natendra Nath Sen

A Shawl Merchant

By Gaganendranath Tagore

By courtesy of S. Kamalendranath Tagore

A sleepy old man

Pandits

By Gaganendranath Tagore

By courtesy of Sj. Kanakendranath Tagore

IQBAL, THE POET-PHILOSOPHER OF ISLAM

M. Ziauddin

URDU poetry of the mid-19th century, with the notable exceptions of Mir and Ghalib, was imaginative, if at all, only in its conventional form; in spirit it was more dead than alive. We are now in a position to judge it as we have outlived it. With the submission of the country to its foreign rulers the people had sunk deep in despair and developed indifference to fate. Our literature of that period reflects a morbid mentality, an utter barrenness of spirit and impotency of thought. Pedantry and play with words and rhymes was all that passed as art. In form Urdu poetry had become a hopeless mimicry of the Persian masters of old.

Then followed a brief period of initiation into European learning that was being introduced into the country. Sir Sayed Ahmad and his companions were the first to shake off their lethargy and indifference. To this great reformer and his worthy companions the Moslems of India owe their regeneration into modern times. The speeches and writings of Sir Sayed Ahmad, Mohsanul Mulk, Charagh Ali, Nazir Ahmad, Shibli, Hali, Sharar, and Azad ushered in a period of renaissance in Urdu literature.

The first reaction of the Moslems to English education was that of bewilderment. European literature had taken them by storm. Its lightning glare was almost blinding. Though its spirit was humanitarian, and free thought imparted to its movements a dynamic quality, material scepticism was the most fascinating quality about it. It became apparent that we would have to change our attitude towards life a great deal. To many of us blind imitation of western thought and custom appeared to be the one solution of all our problems. Scepticism began to play havoc with us. The educated youth was learning to regard tradition, religion and morality as a hoax of the spiritually diseased. This bewildered mind, however, produced no literature worth mentioning, though this new attitude produced a very strong reaction in the mind of the self-respecting conservative. And thus ensued a struggle which roused almost the whole of Moslem society to its feet. On the one hand, the conservative element declared the English education prohibited, on the other, the educated youth with their new acquisition of scepticism challenged all that was sacred to the conservative. The more sensible, however, rose to the occasion and did their best to adapt the new spirit to the older tradition of Moslem thought.

This period of adjustment completed its first phase by the end of the

19th century. The literature it produced is great and valuable and still serves as a basis for the improved thought of today. It is intensely alive, serious, critical, constructive and accommodating. In poetry we find western influence quite apparent. Narrative and descriptive verse improves greatly but the ghazal, and lyrical poetry in general, keeps its original form and theme.

The widening mental cleavage between the European West and the Moslem East reached its climax in the 20th century after the great war. It was finally established, so far as Moslem judgment was concerned, that the idealism of Europe concealed a great deal of hypocrisy in it. It lacked faith. God was replaced not by the principle of "the good of the many" but the labour of the many exploited by the few. That was neither Christianity nor Islam. Iqbal was the inspiring protagonist of this challenge.

. . . . . .

Sir Muhammad Iqbal was educated at Cambridge, where his subject of study was philosophy. He with his full understanding of Moslem culture was in a position to judge the Europe of his day. And when he pronounced his verdict in 1907, the whole of the educated Moslem community rang in consonance ;

"O people of the west !
God's world is not a shop.
The coin you value so highly will prove to be a counterfeit.
Your civilization is doomed, it will commit suicide with its own dagger
An edifice built on so frail a base is sure to tumble down."

(*Bāng i-Darā*, p. 150).

A seal was put, as it were, on the final verdict of the East. In Iqbal the Moslem India felt it had found its spokesman. His poems were most eagerly awaited by Urdu speaking people, and received the widest publicity that was possible for the Urdu press to give. Such an honour had never been accorded to any other Urdu poet before Iqbal, for he had the vision which the Moslems needed badly. With his advent a new chapter seemed to have opened in the history of Urdu literature. He understood the Moslem mind, had a clear vision of its future and he could inspire. No longer was poetry to be indulged in as an idle recreation. Poetry came to be a mission. It was to mould the mind of the people, give them courage in life and faith in their future.

"The spring has come and I am the first flower to bloom.
My companions have not appeared yet.
I look into the mirror of the stream to see myself,

That I might have the joy of looking at the face of a companion.
The pen that dictates the course of life,
Sends a message to the world written on my coloured petals.
My mind is fixed on future, my eyes watch the trend of the present,
I am lost in the luminous beauty of the day to come,
And the new order it will bring on Earth.
Yea ! out of the Earth have I sprung up and
donned the form of a rose.
In essence I am a star fallen apart from the cluster of the Pleiades ?"

(*Payām-i-Mashriq*, p. 95.)

But Iqbal did not merely challenge the ultimate value of western culture ; he built up something positive, a constructive philosophy. He has re-stated, almost re-constructed, the philosophy of Islam in the light and language of modern thought. This task had been attempted previously by some Moslem thinkers but had somehow lacked finality about it. It needed more clarity and a fuller exposition in terms of modern ideology. Iqbal has succeeded in putting the Moslem point of view of the world against the background of modern philosophies expounded by western thinkers. The Islamic reference through which alone could Moslems approach western thought was rediscovered. The continuity of the Moslem point of view was traced to earlier thinkers and finally established. The credit of it all goes more to Iqbal than to any other thinker, though Shah Waliullah of Delhi, Muhammad Abdu of Egypt, Jamaluddin of Afghanistan and that superb scholar and writer, Abul Kalam Azad, have played their pioneer part. In the absence of this Moslem point of view Moslem students felt shaky against the privileged superiority that was conceded to western thought by all.

As a good Moslem, Iqbal firmly believes that the salvation of humanity lies in its adopting the Moslem point of view of life. As a philosopher he expounds this point of view and shows its universal applicability. As a poet he invests this philosophy with its appropriate emotional background. His poetry, being an emotional interpretation of the Islamic conception of life and God, is therefore pan-Islamic. But, in spite of this pan-Islamic and, in a sense, communal bias, the most dominant note in his poetry is that which deals with man and his freedom. The following English translation of a poem from the *Jawīd Nama*, done by the poet himself, would give an idea of his characteristic theme and style.

"Art thou in the stage of 'life', 'death', or 'death-in-life' ?
Invoke the aid of the three witnesses to verify the 'station' :
The first witness is thine own consciousness :
See thyself, then, with thine own light.

The second witness is the consciousness of another ego :
See thyself, then, with the light of an ego other than thine.
The third witness is God's consciousness :
See thyself, then, with God's light.
If thou standest unshaken in front of this light,
Consider thyself as living and eternal as He.
That man alone is real who dares,
Dares to see God face to face !
What is 'Ascension' ? Only a search for a witness,
Who may finally confirm thy reality,
A witness whose confirmation alone makes thee eternal.
No one can stand unshaken in His Presence ;
And he who can, verily, he is pure gold.
Art thou a mere particle of dust ?
Tighten the knot of thy ego,
And hold fast to thy tiny being !
How glorious to burnish one's ego, . .
And to test its lustre in the presence of the Sun !"[1]

It is this intellectual aspect of his poetry which gives Iqbal a unique position in the Urdu and Persian literatures. To speak of his poetry is mainly to discuss his philosophy. He has established a standard of his own which is at once highly poetical and deeply philosophical. He has changed to a great extent the very spirit and matter of both Urdu and Persian poetry, successfully adopting western forms and creating an entirely new standard of verse. His *Jawīd Nama*, for example, marks a complete departure from the older styles of narrative and lyrical poetry. The language of the most important of his poetical works is Persian, for through the medium of this language alone could the poet approach the majority of the educated Moslems of the world. After Jamaluddin of Afghanistan Iqbal's influence has been the widest among Moslems. It is not probably saying too much when he says :

"A multitude had lost its way in the wilderness,
My call has brought them together and set them on as a caravan."

(*Payām-i-Mashriq* p. 81.)

His one theme on which he lays all the emphasis he is capable of is the self-assertion and freedom of the individual and, through the individual, of the community. His whole philosophy revolves round this basic princi-

1. *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, pp. 187, 188.

ple of human freedom. And what makes his poetry remarkable is that, in spite of its philosophical bias and the novelty of its ideology, it does not lose its romantic appeal. He excites our emotion by referring to Nature and history for evidence.

"You would miss the charm of the garden of my poetry,
If you are not a seeker yourself.
I show you that which is hidden in the veins of a flower,
My spring is no mere magic of pure form."

(*Payām-i-Mashriq* p 25.)

It is the imagery and form in which ideas are presented that gives his philosophy its aesthetic appeal. Added to his imagery are the music and the grandeur of his diction.[1] Among modern poets only Josh of Malihabad and 'Arshi of Amritsar have succeeded in imitating his style. But they lack—Josh more than 'Arshi—the vision and strength of Iqbal and therefore fail to carry Iqbal's conviction. I shall now give a free translation of some of his verses which, I hope, will give some idea of his style :

"Who is singing full of joy and fire ?—
Pouring madness into the sober broodings of the wise !
No doubt, the poverty of the Sufi may have lordly demeanour,
But unfruitful is the kingdom which is not real.
Nor does the cell of the Sufi contain that spiritual wealth that was
Once attested by a document written with lion's blood !
O mendicants ! What do you think of that man of God
Who conceals in his collar that tempestuous revolution,
That will yet overtake mankind !
The man of God who in the glow of his mind is a luminous flame,
In the quickness of his grasp is lightning itself !
Yea ! he knows, when monarchies develop a plethora of madness,
Then it is that God sets free His lance—
Changiz Khan and Timur !
But say the Arabs and the Persians :
This infidel of India works massacres *sans* sword and spear !"

Thus it is the strong, sharp, and yet musical and metaphorical language that contains the secret of the appeal of his poetry and makes it irresistible. Its rhyme is perfect and the imagery suggestive. We miss the simplicity of language and the soft flow of purely lyrical grace, such

1. If we take into account the modern tendency in Urdu literature which seeks simple and homely, rather than Persianised, expression, it might be said that Iqbal is probably the last of the poets who have followed Ghalib in style. But which tendency would last longer and overcome the other cannot be predicted just now.

as one finds in the poems of Mir and Dard, but then there is nothing slow, soft and simple about Iqbal. Neither would these qualities have suited his purpose. He is by nature a thundering storm or a torrential flood. He rarely touches purely lyrical subjects. But, when he does, he surpasses all contemporary Urdu poets in the sweetness of his language, excellence of poetic grace and depth of feeling, though he fails to achieve the lyrical flow of the older Persian and Urdu poets. Even in his most simple, romantic verse there is always a shade of philosophy. As this shade is most emphatically not the conventional Sufism, its presence is felt. All this makes his poetry so much the more his. Almost every line of it can be identified as his. The following lines, taken from his *The Spirit of Earth Receives Adam*, are typical of his recent Urdu verse :

"*Man ! open your eyes and look at the earth,*
the sky and the space between.

. . . . .

Under your control are the dark clouds above,
This heavenly dome, the silent space, the mountains, the
sea and the air.
Till yesterday angels had bewitched the world with miracles,
Mark the magic you have wrought today on the mirror of Time.
The splendour which is the world-illuminating Sun's,
Will be in your spark, Man !
A new creation is hidden in your art.
Yea ! you would not accept the Paradise that is offered to you,
For you would build one out of the blood of your heart.
O you moulded out of mud ! mark the creation of your unending
struggles !
Every particle of your dust is an eternal cry,
For you from eternity have bid for love.

. . . . .

Behold 'tis your will that comes riding on the back of Fate !"
(*Bāl-i-Jibrīl*)

No less significant is the following allegory :

"Once a young and sprightly fish said to a young falcon :
'This chain of waves that you see is all Ocean !
And there are alligaters in it more thunderous than clouds !
Demons, seen and unseen, are hidden within its bosom !
Irresistible is its tide, land-devouring and quick !
In it are jewels and pearls most precious !

One cannot escape it, it is omnipresent !
It is above us, under our feet and everywhere.
Every moment it foams with the rage of its youth and moves on !
With the passage of time it increases not, nor decreases.'
As she talked on the fish reddened with excitement.
The young falcon laughed and spreading its wings rose in the air,
And said : 'I am a falcon, I have no business on earth !
Be it desert or ocean, all is under my wings !' "

(*Payām-i-Mashriq* p. 135.)

The falcon symbolises the ego in man. It is the idea of the ego, the conscious individuality in man, which is the oft recurring theme in Iqbal. *Personality is a reality and it is all that a man is. It is the God in man.* And beyond his ego a man is neither God nor man. For, as he puts it, "the ocean is not older than its waves." (*Ibid.*, p. 64.)

"I carved an idol after my own image.
After my own self I conceived the idea of my God.
I cannot go beyond my self,
In whatever form I am, I am a worshipper of my own ego."

(*Ibid*, p. 76.)

"Apart from my ego there is no mind in the Creation.
You are the only sign of that signless One.
Therefore, in the ways of your life be more reckless.
There is none except yourself in this wide Space."

(*Ibid.*, p. 77.)

"What do you ask me for, when and wherefore I am ?
I have revolved round myself so that I have been in the ocean of life.
I am like a wave ; if I do not recoil on myself, I am not."

(*Ibid.*, p. 55.)

The poet considers this point of the ego of paramount importance. The freest development should be allowed to the *Khudhī*, the individuality of the member of a society who would ultimately mould the individuality of the community to which he belongs. This development, however, does not only imply a harmonious growth of the individual in his community, and the attainment of the ideal set by the community, it also involves the releasing of the potential capabilities of the individual in visualizing and creating the yet uncreated and unknown. It has to attain the hitherto unreleased freedom of the human mind. The unknown is the ideal, and an undaunted exploration of the untraversed regions of our mind the purpose of our life, our religion, Islam. It is this freedom of man which God has vouchsafed to him as His trust. The Quran puts it in its own phraseology : "Verily,

We proposed to the Heavens, and to the Earth, and to the mountains to receive the 'trust', but they refused to receive it. Man undertook to bear it, but hath proved unjust and senseless" (33 : 72). Man with this trust, his conscious ego, is all-important in the midst of the whole Creation. 'I am the creative truth ', not in the pantheistic sense, as it was taken to mean in the case of Mansur Hallaj, but in the sense that man asserts the Creative Truth in his own finite ego. Such is the Quranic point of view of human individuality.

It was neo-Platonic philosophy, Iqbal asserts, that diverted Moslem thought from this conception of the human ego and gave it a pantheistic turn. Along with Shaik Ahmad and Shah Waliullah, Iqbal first pointed out to Moslems that this diversion of Moslem thought was unfortunate and un-Islamic.[1] The pantheistic view of existence rendered the finite centre of human experience, that is, man's ego, unreal. The Quran holds it as extremely real.

Outside his poetry Iqbal has discussed the Quranic point of view with regard to life, creation, and the human ego, in his recent work, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam.* As he explains in this work, the ego is a unity, a unique unity. It is not the passive witness of the changes that the body undergoes. It is not what is considered to be 'spirit' or 'soul', a separate entity from matter. Theories upholding parallelism or interaction between matter and spirit, the poet holds, have proved unsatisfactory. This division of soul and matter into two conceptions is un-Islamic. The Quranic view, he thinks, is that matter and the consciousness in ego, or soul, are inseparable and exist as a unity. Human ego is individualized directive energy of God. Therefore, 'being' is a system of acts that are spontaneous. Body is repetition of acts, accumulated acts, or, as it were, habits of the ego, the directive will in man, and as such indivisible from matter. "What then is matter ? A colony of egos of a low order out of which emerges the ego of higher order, when their association and interaction reach a certain degree of co-ordination" (p. 100).

"What is this wave of breath in us if not a sword,
What is our ego if not the sharpness thereof !
Ego is the innermost secret of Life ;
It is consciousness in Creation.
In the enjoyment of its self-expression the ego is intoxicated ;
It loves uniqueness, it is like an ocean in a drop.
It is luminous in darkness and light alike,

1. There had all along been a current of thought that had run parallel to the pantheistic Sufism and had faithfully followed the direction of the Quran. Such anti-Greek thinkers as Ibn Muskaway, Jahiz, Ibn Hazm, Ibn Khalladun, etc., had kept up the Quranic point of view of life in their works.

Apparent in 'you' and 'me', yet clean of every distinction.
It has eternity behind, eternity beyond,
Unbounded before and behind,
Floating on the waves of Time, suffering its tumults. . . ."

Plato, more than any other ancient philosopher, is held responsible by Iqbal for the drastic change in Moslem attitude towards reality, which was in its original form nearer truth. What a tremendous task to undo this 'mischief' ! Apart from the general trend of Iqbal's thought which is against pantheism, a part of his *Asrār-i-Khudī* (Secrets of Self), is devoted to the results of neo-Platonism on Islam. In this work Iqbal had strongly criticised Hafiz as the representative of Persian Sufism. Sufi circles of India protested strongly against this criticism, and Iqbal, finding that the passage about Hafiz had served its purpose, expunged it from the later editions of this work. An idea of his fling at Plato might be given here. He characterises the pantheistic attitude towards life as that of the sheep and tells us a story :

"Long long ago there was a flock of sheep in a pasture land who so increased due to the abundance of grass that they feared no enemy. But, as fate would have it, they were smitten by a calamity. Tigers living in the vicinity sprang upon them. This set them thinking, and an old sheep among them, shrewd as a weather-beaten wolf, conceived a cunning means of averting the calamity. The weak in order to save himself takes resort to the device of crafty intelligence. And in slavery, to ward off evil, the power of scheming becomes sharpened. This sheep thought that it was not possible to turn a sheep into a tiger, but to make a tiger a sheep was quite possible. What was needed was to make the tiger forget his nature. It felt inspired and went among the tigers to preach this religion :

'O you insolent liars ! you are not aware of the ill-luck that awaits you. I possess spiritual powers and have been sent among you tigers as your prophet. Whoso is violent and strong is doomed : life is poised on self-denial. The pious feed on fodder, the vegetarian is very dear to God. Disgraced you are for these sharp teeth of yours. They render your senses blind. Paradise is for the weakling. In strength lies perdition. It is evil to seek glory and grandeur, for penury is sweeter than princedom. . . . O you who glory in your slaughter of the sheep, slay your self that you may have honour . , . . Forget yourself if you are wise, or else you are mad. Close your eyes, your ears and your lips that your thought may soar in the lofty sky. This pasturage of the world is nought, nought. Fools, do not cling to this phantom of existence. . . .'

As the race of the tigers had fed to their full, they needed relaxation. This sermon served as a good lulling speech on them. Tigers took to the diet of the sheep and lost their own nature. Spiritual fear then overtook them, they lost their courage and were thoroughly degraded. But they considered this decline their Moral Culture.

Plato the prime ascetic, the philosopher, one from among the ancient fold of the sheep, as he went galloping the mountain of being, got lost in the darkness of his philosophy. So fascinated was he by the 'ideal' that he found senses of no use for man. He said : 'in death lies the secret of life, the candle is hundred times more luminous when put out.' He it is who dominates our thought ; his wine sends us to sleep and robs us of our world. He is a sheep in human form and he has command over the Sufi. He soared with his intellect to the skies and said : 'this reality is a myth.' He it was who dissolved the elements of life and cut the bough of life's beautiful cypress. Plato thought 'loss is gain', his philosophy rendered all being non-being. . . ." (*Asrār-i-Khudī* p. 44).

The innermost necessity of our being is the self-assertion of our ago. This self-assertion involves conquering of obstacles, which, as a process, is the primary condition of our life. That is why, thinks Iqbal, the conquest of Nature, according to the Quran, is the purpose of man. This purpose can be accomplished either by understanding Nature intellectually or by 'living through Nature'. The second process is known in Quranic terminology as *īmān*, which is vital faith and not a verbal or intellectual assertion or understanding of Reality. Fatalism came in Islam with Greek and Indian philosophy, where God was transcendent and the last link in the logical chain of causation—the Creator of the Universe and above His Creation. Moslem kings who wanted divine sanction for their misdeeds, for example the Omayyad kings, supported and helped to propagate Fatalism among Moslems. To counteract this perversion Iqbal emphasises the freedom of the individual.

A fully grown and perfectly balanced individuality is the 'vicegerant' of God on earth and such an individuality alone is perfectly human. Such a personality is not exactly Nietsche's super-man, who is a product of aristocracy and establishes the rule of his like. Humanity as a whole grows nearer perfection as the number of more or less perfect individuals increases. We are on the path of evolving a democracy of gods, so to say, presided over by the most perfect among us. Unity of humanity conceived only intellectually would remain only an idea and an impotent dream at its best, thinks Iqbal, if it is not vitally supported by love and will. The ideal of the brotherhood of man, if it is to be real, must be realized in man's social,

economic and intellectual structure of existence. In short, humanity must be culturally united and live as one family. No real unity between two or any number of people is possible on mere economic basis. A complete unity of mankind was conceived by Muhammad. The ideal of Islam is the formation of one human brotherhood, not only as a mental hypothesis, but one realized in actual life. He had conceived the whole world as a single Mosque. But he has succeeded only partially Completion of his task is, urges Iqbal, the life-purpose of every Moslem. "Islam is non-territorial in its character," he observes, "and its aim is to furnish a model for the final combination of humanity by drawing its adherents from a variety of mutually repellent races, and then transforming this atomic aggregate into a people possessing a self-consciousness of their own. This was not an easy task to accomplish. Yet Islam, by means of its well-conceived institutions, has succeeded to a very great extent in creating something like a collective will and conscience in this heterogeneous mass . . . " (*Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, pp. 158, 159).

That explains why Islam is said to be against every idea of nationality. Believing in human unity it justifies no economic or racial reasons for the division of humanity into different groups. It has broken nationalities and formed a brotherhood of them. Nationalities have again appeared among Moslems but it is yet to be seen if these have come to stay. In case Moslem states retain their separate existence, Iqbal foresees a federation of them. In any case he advises that Moslems should not revert to the pagan days of humanity and be divided into racial tribes. Racial differences should not be anything more than mere references among political groups of men.

"We are not Afghans, nor Turks nor Tartars.
Born of a garden we belong to a single bough.
Discrimination in colour and caste is forbidden to us,
For we are the bloesoms of a single Spring."

(*Payām-i-Mashriq* p. 52.)

In this connection we might mention what Iqbal thinks of the federation of nations as represented in the body of the League of Nations :

"So that the ancient tradition of war,
May not hold good in modern times,
They say, the well-wishers of humanity have adopted a novel method ;
But I do not know more than this :
An association was founded,
For dividing the graves of other countries among its members."

(*Payām-i-Mashriq*, p. 233.)

Iqbal puts great stress on that neglected potentiality of the human ego in every individual, which is love and which has suffered on account of the exclusive development of the intellect. The terrible loss in the equilibrium of human relations in the world is due to this exclusive growth of the human intellect.

"Intellect is the harp of life in the West,
In the East love is the secret of all creation.
Intellect comes to understand Truth through love,
And love is firmly established in intellect.
When both unite they create a new world.
Arise then, unite intellect with love,
And cast the mould of a new Age.
The flame of the man in the West is damped,
His eyes see, but his heart is dead.
The West is wounded by its own weapons,
Like its prey it too is gasping for the last breath.
Do not expect life and intoxication in the Western wine :
Its sky would not produce another Age.
Life is fire and full of love because you have a spark yet left in you.
The task of creating a new world lies with you. . . .
If you have the heart of a Moslem then look deep
Within your mind and the Quran :
Hundreds of new worlds lie hidden in its leaves. . . ."

Of this new Age, new world, we are reminded again and again ; it is going to emerge and signs of it are already before us. It shall appear, for the mind of man has conceived it. This Age will begin in Asia. Moslem people will play an important role in its inauguration. Humanitarian principles of life and Socialism of a nature conceived by Muhammad will prevail. New combinations of humanity would take place, a greater and a wider group of mankind will this time form into a unity and save the world from destruction. The nihilistic Socialism of the Russian kind will not gain much ground in Asia.

"The author of *The Capital*, that Jew, was a prophet,
But not inspired by a Gabriel.
Truth is hidden in his error ;
His heart is Moslem, his head an unbeliever's.
The spirit is lost to the man of the West ;
He seeks the pure jewel of life in the depths of his stomach,

But it is not the body from which the life draws its colour and perfume.
Their socialism touches nothing but the stomach.
But as long as the sense of human brotherhood
Is located in our heart and not in our stomach,
The source of its strength is heart, not water and earth. . . ."

(*Jāwīd Nāma* p. 69.)

The strength of our faith, emphasises Iqbal, lies in our capacity for love. It is this emotion which creates beauty in our thoughts and deeds. This emotion is the essence of Islam and every law a channel of its expression.

"Emotion is the innermost secret of creation.
O shrewd way-farer ! without this emotion of a Moslem,
Neither would you find any path of action—
Nor would you have ap in your faith..."

This potential source of action is often described as madness in a genius. Nothing is accomplished in this world without this madness in pursuit of a purpose. Iqbal sings of this creative madness. No new age can begin without a sufficient number of creative maniacs. Was it some such man whom Rumi sought when he sang ?

"I am sick of the Pharaoh and his tyrannies,
I wish there appeared a Moses with his miracle-working hand !
Yesternight the Shaikh went round the city, lamp in hand ;
He said : I am sick of demons and beasts, I wish I met a man ;
I am tired of these slack-elemented companions of mine,
I want the lion of God, the Rustam of the fable-land.
I said to the Saikh : We have searched, such a one is not found.
He said : Yea ! the man that cannot be found I want."

(Quoted in *Jāwīd Nāma* p. 12.)

Such a one is being born, says Iqbal. His existence was noticed with the birth of the first man, and when he was born

"Love gave a shout of joy : A bleeding heart is born.
And a quiver ran through Beauty's being :
One with sight was born.
Nature was perturbed : Out of this helpless Earth,
A self-creator, self-destroyer, a self-visioned one was born !
The news went round the heavens and reached the abode of Eternity:
Beware, O veiled ones ! The tearer of all veils is born !"

(*Payām-i-Mashriq* p. 97.)

Such is the mission of man. Our conventions and habits keep us chained to our lot. We lack that eccentric energy, that creative madness, which opens up new vistas, new horizons of life. Man by nature is a seeker ; his capacity for search and creation determines the worth of his life, which is a search, a march into the unknown.

"Behold if your eye possesses sight :
Life is busy building a new world.
In this very ancient dust I see the jewel of new life,
The eye of each particle of it is a beholding star.
The seed which is yet lying in the dust,
I see it already grown young, with branches shooting from branches.
I find mountains light as feathers,
And feathers heavy as mountains.
The revolution that Fate is not able to conceive,
I see it, I know not how.
Happy is the man who sees the rider in the dust raised in yonder future ;
Happy is he who from the vibration of a single string
Understands the nature of the music that will be.
Life is a flowing stream and would flow on.
The old wine is young and would ever remain so.

. . . . .

The land where I have shed tears of blood,
Would preserve these tears as precious rubies.
In the darkness of the night, they brought me the happy news of the morn !
The candle was blown out and the Sun pointed to me."

Reflecting upon the moral and political condition of Asia, Iqbal advises his co-Moslems to learn to dare and believe in their destiny, for the future is no longer with the West, but with them :

"A miracle ! or is it the changing time !
The magic of the West is broken in the East !
The nest of the bird of song is often smashed to bits by a bolt from the heaven ;
But I have found the secret of life :
Those who must sing should build their nest in the lightning itself !
The bondage of God makes us divine,
The bondage of the world a beggar."

(*Bāl-i-Jibrīl*, p. 80.)

A state of tension, surcharged with the electricity of creative madness, is the condition of life which will survive. Its strongest weapon would be love, lack of which has disturbed the peace of the world. Iqbal finds Lenin complaining to God in Heaven :

"O Lord ! you are omnipotent and just !
But in your world down there the lot of the poor is a wretched one.
When would you sink the boat of capitalism there ?
The world looks to the day when you would redeem
The injustice done to the labourer."

The angels then join in with their chant .

"The intellect yet runs amok on Earth, O God !
Love has not found its place.
O Eternal Painter ! Your work is incomplete yet.
Man is exploited by the clever and the cunning, the priest, the saint and the landlord.
The world still goes on the same old way. . . .
Wisdom, religion, art and crafts serve the purpose of the wicked,
Love that unties all knots of difficulties is not common on Earth.
The essence of life is love and the sharp edge of love is self.
Alas ! this sharp sword is yet hidden in its scabbard !"

(*Bāl-i-Jibrīl*, p. 148.)

As every new creation needs the destruction of the old, Iqbal urges this destruction to come. Destruction and bloodshed done for the good of humanity and out of love for truth and justice, Iqbal appears to believe, are a blessing. When God hears the complaint made by Lenin of the injustice done to man by man on Earth, He orders destruction of the present order :

"Get up then, and go and wake up the poor of my world,
And shake the walls and arches of the palaces of the lordly ones !
Heat up the blood of the slaves with the fire of faith :
And make the poor sparrow fall in with the lordly hawk !
The day will surely come when the masses will rule ;
Efface then the sign of every old form that comes in their way.
The field that does not lend sustenance to the peasant, set to fire !

(*Bāl-i-Jibrīl*, p. 150.)

We would grossly misinterpret Iqbal if we were to understand that in urging the free development of the individual he even allows him to sever the bond of his community. For Iqbal the individual does not exist apart from his community. He must move with the community, if possible,

to lead it. The whole community must live as one individual. Isolated effort at spiritual salvation, amounting to the renunciation of the society, is strongly condemned in Islam. In the political sphere too—as in the case of the individual so in that of the community—Islam demands loyalty to God alone and not to the crown. As regards the submission of the Moslem to God alone the poet is of opinion that God must not be taken to mean any transcendental spiritual authority guiding human affairs from a safe distance. That is not the Quranic point of view of God-head. In Iqbal's words : " . . . Since God is the ultimate spiritual basis of all life, loyalty to God virtually amounts to Man's loyalty to his own ideal nature" (*Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 140).

I have not come across any final and unambiguous statement made by Iqbal on the problem of nationalism for Indian Moslems. It is, however, clear that he wants them to keep the structure of their society sharply defined from those of other communities. In India, unity of Moslems with other communities can only be on economic and political grounds, and not on social and cultural. It is obvious that such a unity alone cannot serve the purpose of real and uniform nationalism such as is looked for by our politicians. The social and cultural uniformity of foreign nationalities is lacking in India. Therefore we miss the spirit of true 'nationalism'. The recent controversy between him and Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani was, unfortunately, based on mutual misunderstanding, arising from a mis-statement reported by the press. Neither actually contradicted the other. They failed to tackle the real problem : the nature of the nationalism that could be religiously sanctioned for the Moslems and which would not contradict, at least in theory, the pan-Islamic position of the Moslem brotherhood.

The position *vis-a-vis* the British is clear. They have usurped the freedom of Moslems in India. It is therefore incumbent upon every Moslem to win back that freedom. But on what terms of compromise should Hindus and Moslems unite to rule India, when freedom is got, is not clear. Nor does Iqbal seem to put any light on this question. But, in any case, to a Moslem freedom is of greater importance than the details of democratic or socialistic government that a free India might evolve.*

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*While this article was in press came the sad news of the sudden death of the poet. It is a great loss which every Indian shares.—*Ed.*

SOME ASSAMESE FOLK SONGS *

Darling, tinge your lovely hands
with the festive yellow,
when the riotous spring arrives
in all its glory.
And shed, I pray you,
a tear for the beloved
who is far away.
For if you weep not
in the festive season,
how else would you recall
the far-away lover—
the mate of all your joy ?

Ah, dear is the distaff
and dear the spinning-wheel,
as it winds the silken threads—
but dearer far is the festive day.
How sad it would be
if I were to go without the joy
it brings to every heart !

Oh maid of my dreams,
sing of love no more !
Hie thee home, my darling,
for between you and me
is many a mischief-maker.

How to win you,
queen of my heart ?
I shall repair to the stream
when you go with the pitcher
poised in your dainty arms.
There I shall steal a glance
as I take my morning dip.

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*Translated from the original Assamese by Khitish Roy.

Wistful and yearning—
this love of mine.
It is a soft but stubborn knot :
you may twist it
this way and that,
but the knot
there is no untying.

Lo, my golden girl,
the sands of the river
remain not at the same place,
borne with the onward ripples
as they are.
Such is our youth, darling,
ever on the shift,—
flitting like faded smiles
lost in forgetfulness.

I can conquer the mountain crest,
trample on its glory,—
but, ah, the soft-trailing creeper,
she gets the better of me.
I can tame the unbroken elephant of the wild,
but, ah, my frail, delicate darling
will not yield to coaxing.

She was busy washing the household linen
with her dainty hands,
squatting on the steps
at the water's edge.
As my fishing skiff stole under the steps
I had just time to see
my love make eyes at me ;
and now am I light-hearted
even as my boat is.

VISITATION *

Rabindranath Tagore

THE neighbourhood has a club :
it's in the big hall on the ground floor of my house
lent by me.
This noble gesture had fetched me
a column of commendation in the papers,
and a garland at a solemn sitting.

For the last eight years
my home is empty.
Back from office
I see the members sprawling ;
some gloating over the morning paper
with dusty feet raised on the table,
some playing at cards,
some engaged in a noisy passage of words.
The stuffy room is dense with clouds of tobacco ;
cigarette ash, and spent match sticks
and burnt out stubs
suffocate the ash trays.

I fill the void of my evenings
with the incessant chatter
of this boisterous crew.
And then the turning down
of the empty cup of leisure,

* Translated from the original Bengali (*Sesh Saptak*. No. 31) by Khitish Roy. The translation has been deliberately made as literal as the rendering of the sense could permit, so as to give an idea to the non-Bengali readers of the Poet's recent experiments in prose-verse. To keep strictly to the original and yet do adequate justice to the beauty and power of Rabindranath's Bengali is an impossible task. However, the translator has done well to risk taking liberties with the sound, rather than with the sense, of the poem ; which gives the translation its special merit.—*Ed.*

and the weariness of the night after ten.
From the street beyond
comes the rumbling of the tram cars ;
all alone
I turn on the gramophone
and listen to the same old songs
in monotonous rotation.

The club is empty this evening ·
the members have gone to the station
to welcome home a comrade from overseas,
furnished with a tail of foreign degrees.

I have switched off the lights.

After a long time
that drab humdrum every day,
herald of the commonplace,
is absent from my home,—
this calm evening.
And every little thing in the room
assailed me with an awareness
of a faint fragrance of hair,
of an all-pervading touch,
as they did
eight years ago.
Every little thing harkened in suspense,
and that empty easy-chair,
with its covering of flowery chintz,
awaited the advent with bated breath.

In the depth of the night
the old gnarled tree, of ancestral associations,
stood in solemn silence before my window.
Through the tiny strip of space
between this great tree
and that house beyond the street,
there shone a single star.

I gazed at it
with a catch at my heart,
and remembered how its image had rocked
in the overflowing love of the blissful pair
on many, many an eve.

I recall one small episode out of many.
That morning I missed the paper
in the bustle of duties ;
in the evening I sat here with the paper,
in this very room,
on this very chair by the window.
She stole from behind
and snatched it away ;
then began a fight for possession
in the midst of rippling laughter.
I salvaged the lost property
and dared a second enterprise
when she switched off the light.
That darkness defeated my pertinacity
and won her the triumph
of a soft smile.
That darkness now wraps me in a tight embrace,
even as she did
in the loneliness of that night.

Suddenly the wind began to blow
through the branches,
the window creaked,
and the door-curtain fluttered :
I said—
"Have you returned home, dear,
from the land of Death,—
in that almond-coloured *saree ?*
I felt the breath of a sigh
and caught a mute whisper :
"To whom shall I come ?"
"Am I not there for you ?" I asked.
"He whom alone I knew—

the beloved of my girlhood days—
I see him no longer in this hall."
"Is he nowhere to be found ?"
Gently she whispered :
"He is there
Where I am, nowhere else."

Came an excited hubbub
    at the door :
they are back from the station.

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

K. R. Kripalani

EVERY virtue induces its own perversion : The brave are tempted to bully, the clever to cultivate cunning ; the aristocrats tend to be arrogant, the cultured callous in their exclusiveness ; even the altruism of the saints and lovers of mankind has a way of becoming a little too oppressive, disinfecting our flesh until it smarts. Very few there are who keep guard on their virtues, whose intellectual alertness is well posted to watch the secret manoeuvres of their minds.

One of such, perhaps, is Pandit Jawaharlal. This is not to attribute to him a moral perfection. Indeed, there is nothing of a moral genius, of a Gandhi, about the Pandit ; no deep-seated insight in the moral being in man drives him to seek its context outside human institutions and merely social purposes. No Hound from Heaven dogs his steps. But a sincere, brave and restless soul, nevertheless, moved mainly by motives which may be described as heroic and chivalrous. His virtues, being positive, earnest, even aggressive, would have their attendant vices, if a certain innate moral cleanliness, combined with an intellectual capacity for self-analysis and a sense of irony capable of being directed against himself, did not constantly keep him alive to such danger, blunting, if not breaking, the fang of fanaticism inherent in all revolutionary ardour, and giving to his outlook a certain wholesome reasonableness.

His bitterest enemies do not doubt his courage ; his very daring has perhaps made them his enemies. And though even now not hard to provoke, those who have known him for long say that as his power and prestige in public life have increased, what of pugnacity and impetuosity he had have perceptibly diminished. He still carries in him the dash and self-assurance of an aristocrat, and now and again his nostrils quiver in defiance with the easy scorn of one born to command. But hardships, set-backs, daily contacts with powerful colleagues, and, perhaps more than all these, the subtle, chastening influence of Gandhiji's personality, have taught him to carry his idealism with temperance and grace. His frankness may still on occasions hurt one's self-complacence, but no one can justly accuse him of arrogance. Indeed, there is a simple and refreshing comradeliness in his manner and such genuine freedom from the vulgar desire to patronise, which great men unconsciously acquire, that one is led to wonder if he is sufficiently conscious of his greatness—so used are we to the self-conscious reserve of the great.

Yet he *is* conscious of the significant role he is playing in his country's destiny today, and, as he tells us in his Autobiography, he is quite aware that he is worshipped by thousands in India as a hero, an awareness which his recent tours round the country could only have confirmed. But his constant habit of self-analysis and his capacity for intellectual detachment have, on the one hand, kept alive the consciousness that his significance is due more to the greatness of the cause which he has so loyally and manfully espoused than to any wonder-working power in him ; and, on the other, exposed to him the irony of basing one's worth on the adulation of the multitude. "My reputation as a hero," he puts it with characteristic emphasis, "is entirely a bogus one, and I do not feel at all heroic, and generally the heroic attitude strikes me as silly." He admits, however, that this extravagant adulation did go to his head a little, for "only a saint perhaps, or an inhuman monster could survive all this unscathed and unaffected. . . ."

It is significant that for him only a thin line divides "a saint" from "an inhuman monster." For saintliness as a delight in the mere renunciation of the self is to him meaningless, save, perhaps, as a spectacle. He would regard sacrifice itself as a way of asserting self. The end of life cannot be to repudiate itself. The background of his patriotism, he suggests, is probably pride—pride of an independent spirit, resenting invasions of what it regards as its rights. And his Socialism is perhaps the result of a trained objective attitude, of a will essentially adventurous but more rational than subtle and intuitive, allied to a generous and ardent soul. "I have not consciously renounced anything that I really valued ;" he says, "but then values change."

What of his values ? An intelligent exercise of the physical and mental faculties of man, a courage to pay the full price of each good, coupled with a generous impulse to share all good things with one's fellow-creatures, make up for him the main values of life. In other words, a refined and humane materialism. But culture as an end in itself, as a mere measure of superiority to the crowd, as a private luxury, like a rich cellar, to intoxicate at leisure, he does not care for. No wonder he is accused of being not sufficiently Indian. They say he is not sufficiently metaphysical in his questions, nor sufficiently mystical in his answers—and perhaps not sufficiently elusive in his conduct—to be a true Indian. May be, he too feels somewhat the same about himself. He acknowledges that in the mental atmosphere of his land he feels a foreigner. The London *Times* once sneered at him as "a product of pre-war Harrow and post-war Moscow." But are we Indians so very metaphysical after all, and are our actions always so moved by "spiritual" principles that a rational mind and

a brave heart should be regarded as un-Indian? Or do the foreigners exaggerate our "spiritual" preoccupations on purpose to coax us into entrusting them with our material welfare?

Be that as it may, whether Jawaharlal is spiritually alien to the Indian tradition or not, certain it is that India today is more allied to him in spirit and mood than to any other political leader. As Mr. Edward Thompson pointed out in a review of the Pandit's Autobiography, "this book is one of the clearest indications we have had of the road India is about to travel... The way in which India is turning away from "religion", as 'spiritual' Russia turned from it."

And yet more than any one else, he is the true child and heir of Gandhi, for, like a true child, he is not content merely to follow and copy, but is eager to carry forward the non-conformist and creative spirit of Gandhi in fresh challenges and new experiments. And rightly he stands crowned with leadership by Gandhiji's own hands and carries that great man's trust wherever he goes, however askance some orthodox Gandhi-ites may look at him.

The great gift of Gandhiji to Indian Nationalism was that he redeemed it from its excessive romanticism and effectively interpreted it in terms of the real needs of the "dumb millions" of India. Jawaharlal has only emphasised the full implications of this content in terms of an aggressive ideology. He has accepted, though in a non-religious spirit, the wisdom of Gandhiji's creed of non-violence and has acknowledged and acted up to the great principle that good ends must have good means. He has assimilated as much of Gandhism as is compatible with his temperament and his convictions, and so well has he done it that, on the one hand, zealous Gandhi-ites look upon him with some mistrust, and, on the other, young, aggressive socialists speak of him with a certain reserve. It is significant that Jawaharlal, who more than any other individual has carried the faith of Socialism to the masses, is not a member of the Congress Socialist Party. Perhaps he does not find it a very pleasing occupation to keep on emphasising his differences with his comrades in the Congress, with whom he has stood shoulder to shoulder in many a campaign, while apologetically explaining away his differences with Marxists, who have consistently sneered at the character of our national struggle.

Like other leaders, the Pandit is a believer in his own particular creed and preaches it wherever he goes. But even more than the creed he propagates, is the spirit he infuses in the people that explains his present hold on their minds. Rabindranath Tagore has likened him to the spirit of Spring, of eternal youthfulness. The Poet at least does not regard him as alien to the spirit of this land. An alien spirit could not inspire. Whether

Jawaharlal will succeed in carrying that inspiration to the achievement of the goal he has set before his country is a matter in which chance may play an uncertain part. But he is certainly worthy of the hopes his people have placed in him.

BEAUTY'S BREATH

BEHIND the olive hills, the day fires wane
To yellow. Darkness rises from the bay ;
The purple wavelets chase the light away ;
And time returns to silent night again.
The listening shadows of the forest kneel
In dark arcades. Along the aisles a thrush,
The lonely acolyte of evening's hush,
Jingles his chimes upon a silver wheel.
In floods of silent incense, Beauty's breath,
Warm mist against the chill of evening, flows,
While thought and passion smoulder to repose,
Quenched in the truth of love and life and death ;
Mind finds the rest that homing spirits learn,
The peace we left, and whither we return.

Baldoon Dhingra.

REVIEWS

THOUGHT AND REALITY : By Dr. P. T. Raju.

London : George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1937. pp. 285. 10s. 6d.

THE book under review consists of five parts, each being divided into small chapters, some of which are in fact so small that they might be more properly called sections. It has a Foreword, as a word of greeting, written by Prof. J. H. Muirhead and is said to be worked out under the direct guidance of Prof. S. Radhakrishnan. It is characterized by its author as a re-orientation of Sankara's system by placing it in line with the idealistic philosophies of the West. For such a re-orientation the author thinks it necessary to lay the metaphysical foundation of the logic of supra-rational Absolutism and to show that "many objections to which the Hegelian Absolutism" is open can be met by a consistent development of Supra-rational Absolutism." Comparative philosophy, in the opinion of Dr. Raju, has not yet accomplished much, and comparison has been superficial, mainly because it has not grasped the guiding principle of Indian thought and the Indian mind. The author, therefore, attempts here to determine the nature of that principle "by comparing Advaita with Hegelianism in which the principle has been the most clearly formulated" (p. 246). The present work, however, is not a full treatise on logic from the standpoint of supra-rational Absolutism which must be fitted into five levels of reality ; yet it is a modest attempt "to furnish not only a metaphysical basis for such a logic, but also a principle which will guide new constructions of sciences incident to social life" (p. 250).

This plan is executed by the author through a critical examination of some of the very thorny problems of Hegel's philosophy because this, in his opinion, is "the most fully developed philosophy of the West." But, when judged from the standpoint of supra-rational Absolutism, Hegel and his followers are found to have gone entirely wrong in almost all their conclusions. And the main reason of this universal disaster is supposed to be their reliance on "thought" and "conceptual thinking" for their theory of the Absolute. As the Absolute is supra-rational, it transcends thought ; nay, thought is so inadequate to Reality that it can express neither its formal nor its material nature ; nor, again, can it express the temporal process. Yet, it was on such an inefficient tool that Hegel depended in order to "penetrate to the core of Reality."

So far one may be sure of the main contentions of Dr. Raju ; but

beyond these it is risky to attempt anything like an exposition or criticism of his assertions. Yet a reviewer must take the risk and say something about the detailed execution of the plan of the book, particularly because in a philosophical work what is of paramount importance is, not what is said by its author, but the way in which he justifies his assertions. Some of the problems discussed in the book before us are : The Absolute as infinite, the Hegelian Absolute and the Individual, Thought and Reality, the Absolute and Negation, the nature and criterion of Truth, Intellect and Intuition, the Universal and the Particular, the logical levels of Truth and Reality, the logical significance of Māyā, etc. As it is not practicable in a review to explain or comment on the author's conclusions and his method of arriving at them in respect of all these topics, a fairly correct idea of them may be formed from his discussions on one or two of these problems.

The problem of individuality and the related problem of the relation of the finite self to the Absolute are shown by our author to be insoluble within the framework of the Hegelian Absolutism, but they are supposed to be fully explained in the light of the principle of *Māyā*. Hegel cannot "save" the individual self, though he takes the Absolute to be a one in many, an organic whole, or a harmonious system of an infinite number of finite selves ; and the main reason of Hegel's failure to save the individual is his organic conception of the Absolute. "The theory of internal relations is a corollary of the organic conception." Consequently, "any act of one member necessarily affects the others." "If an individual changes his place, there arises a change in his very nature, though imperceptible to our finite view. Thus individuality becomes only a "matter of content"; and each becomes a "conflux of universals or qualities", mere adjectives of the Absolute, and so the individual is not saved. But Sankara, on the other hand, "seems to be the most successful in solving this problem." Because, "on the principle of *māyā*, Sankara need not hold the theory of internal relations. . . . When one *jīva* is affected in one way, there need be no corresponding change in others." Tha *jīva* owes its consciousness to *Brahman*, and its uniqueness is contributed to it by *māyā*. Without the *Brahman* "the *jīva* could not have the sense of 'I'. So as regards its conscious nature, the *jīva* is not fully unique. Hence, on Sankara's view, the *jīva* as such, though unique phenomenally, is not so noumenally....Yet as identical with *Brahman*, we should say, it is unique even noumenally." Thus Sankara "has saved the individuality of the finite self both in its phenomenal and noumenal aspects, and that in a peculiar way. Of course, noumenally *jīva* is not unique as a personality in the sense of a self distinguished from not self. For at the noumenal level *jīva* as such does not exist. There it is one with the *Brahman*, which is without a second. Yet in this sense it is unique and is therefore an individual. Phenomenally the individual self is

the product of *māyā*. But *māyā* can be many for the *jīvas*. On the liberation of any *jīva* its own *māyā* vanishes. Hence each *jīva* is unique so far.

This is all that the author has to say for justifying the superiority of Sankara to Hegel in respect of their respective solutions of the problem of individuality. Extracts torn from their contexts become misleading, hence I have given here the author's arguments in full ; and they may be taken as typical of his contentions throughout the work. Extremely controversial issues of philosophy are disposed of with one or two remarks and the verdict is always delivered against Hegel and his followers, the only exception being Bradley for whom our author has a soft corner because Bradley believed in thought committing suicide. It is no doubt conceivable that Hegel's analysis of experience was defective, but its defects cannot surely be removed by a mere appeal to the so-called principle of inexplicability or *māyā*. To say that a given problem is insoluble and inexplicable is not to expose the shortcomings of a particular interpretation of that problem. It is true that Hegel's views on several subjects lend themselves to different interpretations, but this circumstance cannot offer an excuse for putting on his words altogether fanciful interpretations based on a few stray passages cited from his works. An admittedly "fully developed philosophy" certainly deserves a better treatment at the hands of its critics.

Another defect of the work before us lies in its adoption of the method of *obscurum per obscurius*. When philosophy fails as a process of thought, it may still lead to the process of life, which is religion ; thought is not the only form of consciousness ; if thought is what is limited, what transcends the limit must be another form of consciousness ; the breaking up of an integrality into the form of subject and predicate is due to the process of *māyā* ; in every judgment an inexplicable metaphysical process is implied ; when thought reaches the Absolute it ceases to be thought ; Sankara's Absolute is neither static nor dynamic, yet Sankara can have no objection to the view that continual change happens in the Absolute ; the concrete universal must be sought towards the subject of judgment ; had truth been treated not as a system, but as supra-rational and therefore indeterminate, the defect of the coherence notion would have been overcome : any system which wants to avoid pluralism cannot but admit inexplicability at some place or other ; correspondence fails as a criterion even in the case of the finite truth, yet correspondence is an aspect of empirical truth ; it is an unreasonable claim of Hegel to declare that by a study of the nature of pure thought we can know how many categories there are, *a priori* consideration of judgment can give us only five levels ; unless we are able to transcend existence we cannot philosophise ; unless thought is lifted to the real Absolute Knowledge, it cannot be free ; *arthāpatti* resembles the transcendental method

of Kant and the dialectic method of Hegel ; the principle of non-contradiction is not coherence, yet is not incoherence, it means that reality is non-conceptual ; logic begins after Absolute knowledge ; existence is identical with the subject, it includes all the finite detail of the subject in an intensity in which distinctions cannot be drawn ; according to Sankara the spirit is non-difference, hence the spirit can find itself intact in any change of content, choosing some and rejecting the others ; this freedom in the practical sphere has its counterpart in integrality in the theoretical sphere.

Many such assertions are either left without any explanation or they are explained very imperfectly.

So far I have pointed out what appear to me to be the main defects of Dr. Raju's work before us. But the book exhibits at the same time the author's wide reading in the philosophical literature of India as well as of the West, and I agree with Prof. Muirhead in thinking that his gifts and intellectual equipment fit him in a particular degree for the task of contributing to the healing of divisions in the philosophical thoughts of the two countries. The reason why the present book widens the chasm is perhaps to be found in the fact that it has been based on the polemical works of the Advaita school and has been written in the spirit of the Buddhist dialectic method of argument which influenced Śrīharṣa and Citsukha. It is, therefore, misleading to characterise it as a re-orientation of Sankara's philosophy. Our author could have easily discovered in Sankara's works profuse materials for a constructive interpretation of experience, if he had not made the mistake, very common with many interpreters of Sankara, of thinking that the Advaita dialecticians did not depart from the spirit of Sankara's philosophy. Śrīharṣa no doubt believed that he was justified in declaring, like Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti, that he had no thesis to prove and he could, therefore, indulge in purely destructive criticisms of his rivals' arguments. But Sankara declared at the very beginning of his principal work that he had a definite philosophical position to establish there, and he would surely repudiate the suggestion that the cause of the Advaita philosophy was promoted by the purely negative dialectic of the Buddhist school.

A. C. Mukerji.

GLIMPSES OF THE INDIAN RENAISSANCE : By G. Ramachandran. Published by the Central Publishing and Trading Co.

It is a truism that to-day India is caught up in the currents and cross-currents of a renaissance in every aspect of her many-sided life ; cultural, political, social and economic. Mr. Ramachandran in the book under

review has given us the story of this renaissance "in small and stray glimpses."

He first traces the vast background which stretches from the civilization of Mohen-jo-daro to Raja Ram Mohan Roy and asserts that the special feature of the culture of India, down the ages, has been its spiritual bias. It is this culture which, under the impact of our contact with the West, is now waking up to "a new sense of the power and vitality stored within it." He then goes on to study something of the forces that have been at work in this direction.

Passing over, in quick succession, the several "contacts" from the time of Alexander the Great to the coming of the British in the country, he remarks that "a strong Islamic stream of culture has remained with us always and has run parallel to the main stream." The cumulative result has been a readjustment of the culture of India to "a vital and vast synthesis." In the field of religion we have a high and complex structure, "enshrining within it almost every conceivable thought and striving of the human spirit," thanks to the impact of Islam flowering forth in the mysticism of Kabir and others and to the efforts of organisations like the Arya Samaj Brahmo Samaj and the Ramakrishna Mission. The revival in the realm of letters has culminated in the manifold genius of Rabindranath Tagore, "who is the crown of the Indian Renaissance." This was followed by the emergence of a new and powerful nationalism with a special emphasis on the Swadeshi.

From movements Mr. Ramachandran passes on to the men who have dominated our corporate aspirational activities at different points. An appreciatively understanding interpretation of the poetry of Rabindranath and of his Visva-Bharati, the Art section of which "has lighted more lamps for the festival of lights of the Indian Renaissance," of the philosophy-cum-poetry of Sir Mohamad Iqbal "which represents a unique synthesis of three streams of culture, the Islamic-Persian, the European and the Indian" and of the poetry of Sarojini Naidu and Harindranath which indicates "a somewhat exotic but brilliant expression of a temporary tendency of the Indian Renaissance," is followed by a brief account of the political work of Tilak, Gokhale and Dr. Besant "whose powerful advocacy of Home rule gave a lead to all the resurgent forces of Nationalism in India."

The author then speaks with deep devotion of Mahatma Gandhi who, as Gokhale once remarked, "has in him that which could create heroes out of clay," and his many-sided message, as illustrated in the events and episodes of his life dating from the South African Satyagraha struggle to the Travancore proclamation regarding temple entry. He deals with the latter as well as the Harijan movement at greater length. A rapid survey of

some of the literary movements in the provinces and of the rural-minded activities of the Congress ministries brings the story of the Indian Renaissance to a close. And Mr. Ramachandran lays down his pen with these words :—

"The great task of the future undoubtedly is to carry the Renaissance to the seven lacs of the Indian villages." This is but too true.

Mr. Ramachandran's book brings within a brief compass a connected account of the forces which have created the New India of to-day (though one wishes he had dealt with the economic aspect of the Renaissance, too, in an adequate manner) and, as such, will be a good book to be placed in the hands of our younger generation. Its style is simple, its spirit is sincere. And its assessment of the various "values" is just. It is more of a bouquet of flowers plucked with the vision and wisdom of an artist than any assortment of flowers grown in Mr. Ramachandran's garden.

G. M.

TALES FROM THE MYSTICS OF THE EAST :

By Rana Prakaran Jung Bahadur.
Published by Kitabistan, Allahabad. Price Rs. 2-8-0

THE book is appropriately introduced by the Author. "Here," he says, "is a mild bouquet, prepared from those crushed petals that have fallen from the effulgent lotus—the heart of the mystic—in various lands. Unaffected with the passage of time, they (the stories) still retain some of their fragrance." We would, he had said that they retain their original aroma to the full. "Tales from the Mystics of the East" is a collection of very significant short stories of parables that the prophets and teachers of old related to their disciples to illustrate some profound spiritual truth or doctrine of their faith. Though old they have not lost their freshness. They are lyrical in their effect. They affect equally the peasant by the wayside and the sophisticated dweller of the city. It was through such simple tales simply told that knowledge, refinement and culture filtered to the masses in the absence of the press and the radio. Through the ages these mystic tales have made the life of the common people richer and wiser ; they have guided and inspired them. The author has done well in collecting these tales of exquisite beauty and wisdom, so well known to most of us by oral tradition. Here they are made available for all those to whom such tradition is denied.

We agree with the author when he says that much of the original beauty of the stories is lost in translation. In their original Persian and Hindi the tales are beautiful not only for their profundity and significance but for

the balance and rhythm of the language. They are like miniature paintings executed by the delicate brush of the master-artist. In their English reproduction, however, the artist's touch is lacking not only in the literary style but also in the presentation. To take one instance, the author mars the beauty of the simple sweet story of the "Priest and the Untouchable" by tacking on a commonplace moral at the end. This, instead of enhancing, impairs the force and appeal of the story.

The book is beautifully got up for which the Publishers, the Kitabistan of Allahabad, are to be complimented On the whole it is an interesting and instructive production.

Sucheta Devi.

INDIAN POLITICS SINCE THE MUTINY :
By C. Y. Chintamani. Andhra University Publication. Rs. 2/-

THIS little book which comprises a series of Extension Lectures delivered under the auspices of the Andhra University would add little lustre to the reputation of its great author, C. Y. Chintamani. It is unfortunate that Mr. Chintamani, a journalist by profession, should have failed to forget his trade even within the academic precincts of the University at Waltair. The result has been unpropitious ; the book planned on the lines of an interpretive history has been executed with the acumen generally identified with sub-editors of mofussil weeklies. A thousand pities ; for Mr. Chintamani was pre-eminently qualified to treat this fascinating subject interestingly and authoritatively.

It is bad enough that Mr. Chintamani should have failed to forget his profession during these lectures, but it is infinitely worse that he should have failed also to forget his politics. A disgruntled and discomfitted Liberal leader—it has been truly described that the Indian Liberal Party is a party of all Generals ; there are no camp-followers in it—peeps through every page of the book. There is a regrettable atmosphere of peevish perversity towards the end of the book where he has to discuss the complete rout of the Liberal Party.

His politics become very manifest when he comes to discuss personalities. While all political India regrets the disappearance of Aravinda Ghose from our national politics, Mr. Chintamani glibly remarks that Aravinda has "found his proper place as a profound exponent of subjects religious and philosophical." He seems to have a grievance against the Yogi of Pondicherry that as a political leader his speeches and writings were "calculated to inflame the popular mind." I am not aware of any

greater tribute that can be paid to a true national leader working for the emancipation of a subject people.

Discussing the parliamentary work of the Congress Party, he asserts that the Congress Parliamentarians violated the first principle of parliamentary politics by pledging themselves "to act always in obedience to mandates that they might receive from the authorities of the Congress." What then is the proper role of the party in modern politics ? Mr. Chintamani must be a Rip Van Winkle if he thinks that a modern Parliamentarian has any influence or power but that given to him by the authority of his Party. In the words of Dr. Finer, than whom there is hardly a keener and more discerning student of parliamentary procedure, the private member "has the power only to follow his party" (*The Theory and Practice of Modern Government*, Vol. II). Dr. Sydney Low states that in England and other similarly planned countries the party prevails "in a thoroughly uncompromising fashion." He may regret the fact but the fact cannot be questioned. One wonders if Mr. Chintamani would still have clung to this view had his own party be a living one and,not rotting in the political morgue.

A. K. C.

THE GREAT TRIAD

Mr. Natesan, who published over a quarter of a century ago a popular edition of the Bhagavad Gita and also of the Select Works of Sri Sankaracharya with the text in Devanagari and an English translation, has now enriched Indian classical literature with three valuable publications quite unique in character. He has succeeded in the almost impossible task of presenting condensed versions in the Poet's own words of *The Valmiki Ramayana, The Maha'harata* and *The Srimad Bhagavata.* The stories are told by the Poets themselves ; the passages placed before the Reader are selected passages from the respective Poems. The English renderings have been well and carefully done.

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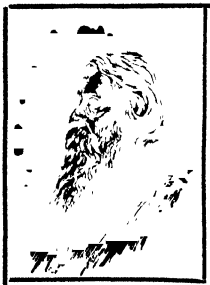

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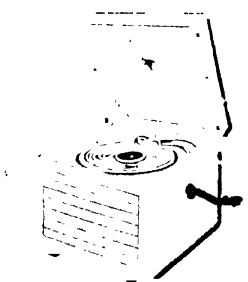

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THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

August *New Series*, **Vol. IV, Part II.** **1938**

STEPHEN SPENDER
(*The Earlier Phase*) *

Dr. Amiya Chakravarty

THE main characteristic, perhaps, of Spender's poetry is a feeling for Time : a subtle inter-play of memory and present experience can be found in some of his successful poems. The historical sense is often mixed up with vague perceptions of some previous existence ; sometimes it appears as a continuity, sometimes links are lost and elements of the past seem to him to contradict each other and lack coherence ; but he has not, like Day Lewis, an antagonism with tradition as such, though some of his theories and beliefs lead him to defy what he considers to be wrong traditions. When his poems lapse into obvious propaganda his conception of the future is made merely to serve a political programme, but in what can be considered to be his truer vein, he gropes for an ideal continuity which may preserve and develop the best elements of civilisation.

Spender's pre-occupation with Time makes him approach mysteries of the past, which geology cannot fathom nor the historical mind fully analyse :

> "The history of man traced purely from dust
> Lives risen for a moment, joined or separate,
> Fall heavily, then are always separate,
> A stratum unreckoned by geologists,
> Sod lifted, turned, slapped back again with spade." [1]

---

* Mr. Spender's recent play *Trial of a Judge* (and some of his Spanish poems not published in book-form) will be considered in a subsequent article.

1. "*In 1929*" (*Poems*, by Stephen Spender, 1934 edition.)

The inscrutable Sphinx-like Past hiding the meaning of its sufferings and wrongs and its message for the Present baffles him :

"I suffer like history in Dark Ages, where
Truth lies in dungeons, from which drifts no whisper ;
We hear of towers long broken off from sight
And tortures and war, in dark and smoky rumour
But on men's buried lives there falls no light ". . . [1]

Sometimes as in the poem on "The Prisoners"[2] the continuity of a wrong system appears to him as a chain which binds helpless human beings from one age to another :

"Their Time is almost Death. The silted flow
Of years on years
Is marked by dawns
As faint as cracks on mud-flats of despair." [3]

In man's inner life immemorial Time shows itself in emotions, only to be merged into the dark when the moments of illumination vanish :

" . . . love
Is soaked in memory and says
I have seen what I see, and I wear
All pasts and futures like a doomed, domed sky—
At night my life lies with no past nor future
But only Space . . ."[4]

In external life, environment and the usual activities reveal a pattern ; a hidden perspective of social existence is sometimes shown to eyes opened by love.

"Behind centuries, behind the continual hill,
The wood you felled, your clothes, the slums you built,
Only love knows where that bird dips his head,
Only the sun, soaked in memory, flashes on his neck." [5]

The bird referred to is the bird of Joy, a simple delight in existence ; and this bird, according to the poet, is clipped and bound in our days.

---

1. Poem XXV.
2. Poem XXIII.
3. Compare Day Lewis' poem on *Losers* (*In A Time to Dance*) in which the dull dwarfed existence of those whose lives have never had a chance to grow is depicted as a tragedy greater than that of men killed prematurely in a war.
4. Poem XXII.
5. Poem XXVI.

Spender's consciousness of the past, though it cannot forget the hidden wrongs, does not deny value to those innumerable individuals who through their sacrifice, their efforts and their work, have created man's civilisation. He remembers

> "The names of those who in their lives fought for life
> Who wore at their hearts the fire's centre.
> Born of the sun they travelled a short while towards the sun,
> And left the vivid air signed with their honour." [1]

There is in his poems an endeavour to go back to those perennial sources of the spirit, to some "ageless spring" of being, in which the delight of the soul is not at war but in essential harmony with the life of the body. In the poem referred to above he speaks of

> " . . . the soul's history
> Through the corridors of light where the hours are suns
> Endless and singing . . ."

and continues

> "What is precious is never to forget
> The essential delight of the blood drawn from ageless springs,
> Never to allow gradually the traffic to smother
> With noise and fog the flowering of the spirit."

With this conception of time, following Hardy, he blends his idea of the growth of will. In the symbolist poetry, preceding Hardy's *The Dynasts*, references were frequently made to a sense of Time and history but the modern linking up with the evolution of consciousness was absent. In Spender's poetry the effort to relate the unconscious of Time with the Conscious of human Will often appears in terms of social responsibilities. When he extends his sense of time and takes "a quick perspective of the future"[2] he paints a symbolic "pylon", which appears

> "Tall with prophecy :
> Dreaming of cities
> Where often clouds shall lean their swan-white neck."[3]

But his city, unlike the ideal vision evoked by O'Shaughnessy in the lines:

> "With wonderful deathless ditties
> We build up the world's great cities"—

1. Poem XXVIII.
2. Poem XXXIV.
3. Poem XXXIV.

refers to a city with a better sanitation, a changed economic system and completely lacking in slums. Spender tries, however, to maintain a balance between his advocacy of concrete goods of life and the values of fundamental humanity, without which any conception of material Utopias must appear empty and void of content. In his *Vienna*, as will be seen later on, he has failed to achieve this balance, but some of his poems show a sensitiveness for his fellow-beings which transcends mere denunciation of wrongs and achieves a better harmony between poetry and propaganda.

Faced with sufferings he cries out—

> "There is no consolation, no, none
> In the curving beauty of that line
> Traced on our graphs through history, where the oppressor
> Starves and deprives the poor . . ."[1]

—he knows that there can be another kind of time, a blind perpetuity of events which aimlessly drags people along. Out of this series of events nothing emerges ; it is like the futile old war of the dynasts which Hardy depicted. Any appeal to an instinctive tradition, or gilding it by imagination is a betrayal of truth. People soon forget the lessons of the past, and evils remain unrectified:

> "Let the wrong cry out as raw as wounds
> This Time forgets and never heals, far less transcends . . ."

The historical sense which accepts facts without challenging them is not therefore, according to the poet, a dependable guide.

To those "Who build a new world in their heart" [2] the challenge of Time is drastic. The creative worker must not identify success with the possibility of his own personal achievements or with the desire of his being remembered.

The problem of the after life is a thing apart. In life as known here below there is no continuity for us on earth, but our work will go on without us, even though the future lies unrevealed to our imagination.

> "Tomorrow Time's progress will forget us even here,
> When our bodies are rejected like the beetle's shard,—
> Time's ambition, huge as space, will hang its flags
> In distant worlds, and in years on this world as distant."[3]

In the final poem of the volume Spender brings this argument to its conclusion ; the sense of history and the significance of the world process

1. Poem XXXVI.
2. Poem XXXVIII.
3. Poem XXXIX.

brings him to enunciate the principle of creative action : we have not only to watch, like the Spirit of the Years, the panorama of events as it appears in life, the whole challenge for us is that our better nature, our humanity is *engaged* in the process. Spender speaks of this challenge—

"*To will this time's change . . .*" ;

he invokes

". . . The polished will
Flag of our purpose which the wind engraves."

In his "New Year" poem he refers to this directive consciousness as "*tempered will*" and indicates that as man develops his initiative,

"Our tempered will shall plough across the nations."[1]

Even though, in his lesser vein, Mr. Spender has sometimes tended to accept panaceas of progress, and indulged in slogans, his poetry is concerned with the problem of the inner will, and in advocating the objectives:—

"Our goal which we compel : Man shall be man".[2]

he puts his final compulsion not on any external movement or on the mass but on the inward truth of the individual :

"For I had expected always
Some brightness to hold in trust,
Some final innocence
To save from dust."[3]

1. Poem XXVIII.
2. Poem XI.
3. Poem XIV.

THE ANTISOPHY OF EGOISM

(A Study of Henrik Ibsen's *When We Dead Awaken.*)

Prof. Baldoon Dhingra, B. A. (Cantab)

LIKE Stirner and Nietzsche, Ibsen is a despiser of all laws on which the existence of the state, human society, science, and art are based. He says in a letter : "The state is the curse of the individual. Let the idea of State be undermined, let voluntary choice and intellectual kinship be set up as the sole determinatives of a union, and we shall have the beginning of a freedom that will be of some use. A changing of the form of government is merely a retail-business on a small scale. Perhaps a little more or a little less so, but take it all in all a wretched concern. The State is rooted in time, in time it will culminate. Things greater than it will fall ; all religion will fall. Neither the conceptions of morality nor the forms of art have an eternity before them. How much are we, at bottom, bound to uphold ? Who will guarantee to me that on Jupiter twice two will not be five ?"

So here we see a revolt against all those natural barriers, founded in the nature of man, which limit his caprices and whims. Neither the laws of humanity, nor the forms of art, nor the multiplication table and the rules of thought are to be in any way binding to the selfish man. The egotist calls everything in question, but not for the purpose of arriving at unquestionable certainty, at truth ; he denies all laws merely to be able, unhampered by any general rule of custom, common sense, or art, to assert, to practise, or conceive of, the maddest things, whenever it happens to suit his selfish caprice to do so. A well-ordered life of men in society, in the community, in the council, or in the state, in which each one must adapt himself to his neighbour and cannot give free rein to his every mad caprice, is utterly repugnant to Ibsen. He simply cannot understand how a man can condescend voluntarily to impose restraints on his own absolute caprice by complying with the regulations of a society of men and by criticising his own actions in the light of these regulations. As George Brandes tells us, Ibsen takes an ever renewed pleasure in reading in a newspaper the words, "and then a commission was appointed," or "then a society was founded." Brandes adds : "I think that Ibsen, in his innermost mind, carries individualism to extremes of which his works alone cannot convey an impression."

So Ibsen is not, as he has been called, an idealist, but an individualist.

He rejects the value of all superimposed ideas and ideals, whether moral, scientific, or artistic: he recognises solely and simply the value of the individual, of the single person. A life in ideas or ideals is no life, according to Ibsen. Truly alive is only the individual with his entirely individual actions, thoughts, and sensations. An idea or an ideal is a thing impersonal, to which the individual subjects himself, even when his own particular sensations, thoughts or wishes struggle against it. Therefore ideal and life are opposed to each other, that is, the ideal is directly hostile to life, just as, on the contrary, life, true, individual, personal life leads to the abolition of all ideals. If individual life alone is justified, and is consequently truth, then every ideal, being hostile to life, is unjustified, and consequently a lie. Therefore Ibsen, in his drama, *The Wild Duck*, makes the physician Relling say that instead of the word *ideals* it would be better to use the plain expression *lies*.

If in the main Ibsen's individualism corresponds to that of Nietzsche, yet it does not entirely coincide with it, but diverges from it in an essential point, namely, in the fact that Ibsen adds to the individual wants of a human being, completion in the person of a being of the opposite sex adapted to his or her individuality. Whilst to the arbitrariness and caprice of Nietzsche's devilish superman no limits whatever are set, Ibsen's man of individual feelings is most intimately connected with the woman fitted to his individuality, and *vice versa*. The greatest crime, nay, the one "unpardonable sin," in Ibsen's sense, which a man can commit against himself and against the woman belonging to him is, for the sake of some ideal, be it an artistic, a scientific, a social, or a religious one, to reject the woman who forms the complement of his individuality, or to sacrifice to such an ideal the wife and child he already has. Ibsen's individualism, too, is directed against all ideals, but it finds a limitation in the relations to wife and child, relations in which, after all, a foundation may be found for the further development of human feelings.

In his Epilogue, *When We Dead Awaken*, Ibsen draws the final conclusion, and declares all life in ideas, also in the province of art, to be not life but death. The artist striving after the ideal renounces the warm, pulsating, true and individual life, and is therefore in reality one of the "dead." Rubek the sculptor, too, is under the sway of such an ideal and thus loses his true life. He desires to give bodily shape to an entirely abstract Christian dogmatic conception, to the resurrection. For this purpose he takes as a model a young woman who loves him inexpressibly and whom he succeeds in imbuing with his ideal to such an extent that she feels herself entirely identified with his creation and calls the work of art he produces her own child. Here we have to deal with the transference of the

entire mental attitude of one person to another, to such an extent that the deeper nature of the other is forced back and suppressed. The deeper nature of Irene consisted in her true womanly impulse towards life and love. It was not the artist, but the man, whom she loved with unquenchable passion. But so greatly had the "poet," who utilises his art to turn reality into illusion, so greatly had the artist, who causes glowing life to pale into an idea, to take the rigid shape of a stone image, transformed Irene's deepest nature, that she would have killed him if, when she stood to him in all her naked beauty, instead of merely contemplating her as an artist, he had looked upon, or touched, her with a man's sensuous desire.

Rubek was possessed by the superstition that he would not produce an ideal work of art, if he clasped in his arms the woman whose naked beauty artistically inspired him. So he left untouched the being whom alone he loved, whose possession was the goal of all the strong desire of his senses. He renounced his real, his true, and warm life, and turned it into a cold, marble, ghostly image. Feature by feature he could reproduce in the statue this woman glowing with life and love. Now he had produced the bodily shape of her whom he loved in cold wet clay and then in marble. Now he possessed a cold, lifeless stone, his petrified ideal ; but his true life, the woman towards whom all his hot blood pulsed, was lost to him. So completely had he entered into the idea that for him Irene should be only an ideal model for his work of art that he thought he had done with her when the work of art was essentially completed. The life they had lived together so far, he therefore looked upon merely as an *episode*, and involuntarily this word came to his lips when he thanked Irene for her devoted assistance.

The word *episode* showed Irene how completely Rubek was monopolised by his artistic ideas and ideals, how little she was to him as a *woman*, as a living reality, in comparison with these ideas and ideals, and this it was that drove her from him. Indignantly she tore herself away and plunged deep into the whirlpool of sensuous pleasures. In variety theatres she exposed her nakedness, not to the eyes of artists, but to the eager eyes of voluptuaries. If, as a *woman*, she had been unable to make any impression on the man she loved, she would now turn the heads of innumerable men, even to madness, to suicide. That was sweet revenge, and often she would have liked to laugh to herself at the comical contrast in her life that now she could exert her womanly power so strongly and over so many, whereas formerly she could not rouse the one ideal dreamer and poet out of his equanimity. But laughter died within her, because her inmost being was destroyed. All her sensuous enjoyments could not deceive her as to the emptiness in her heart, for her life was bound up with that of the

one man, whom she could leave, it is true, but whom she could not forget. Just as she had maddened others, because, attracted by only one man, she had spurned them all, so she herself falls a prey to insanity from which she is but slowly recovering when Rubek again meets her.

He, too, no longer finds satisfaction in his life and occupations. With Irene not only the Muse, his inspiration, abandoned him, but also the woman who had been infinitely dearer to him than he would confess even to himself. At first he thought, indeed, that he could easily find a substitute. He gained possession of a stately house in town and a villa on the Taunitz Lake, and besides won for a wife the lively and cheerful little Maya who, however, had not the least natural turn for the ideal in art. Only too soon did he recognise his mistake, and now he was condemned to pass long, desolate years by the side of a woman incapable of sharing his enthusiasm for the ideal or of being to him a beloved wife. Irene alone had the key to the tiny casket in his breast in which slumbered all his artistic dreams : Irene, too, was the only woman whom he, as a man, desired to possess, who was the complement of his true life. And hence it is so natural that, on meeting, Irene and Rubek immediately talk to each other as if all that had passed since their separation were of no significance. In thought, both had stretched out their arms to each other across time and space to embrace each in the person of the other his own true warm life ; for love melts into one ; where the beloved one is not, there is not life.

But Rubek tries in vain once more to rouse in her an enthusiasm for his artistic ideals ; she no longer possesses the key to the tiny casket filled with ideal dreams and will not possess it : she hates the artist, the "poet," who had poetised her real life away, yet she exults and declares herself freed from the nightmare of insanity, when Rubek speaks of his *repentance*, of his repentance at having despised and spurned the real bloom of life for the sake of an ideal illusion. She was "dead" when her part was merely that of a Muse of Art, "dead" when with an empty heart she gave herself to men she did not love ; but with exultation she welcomes life in this glorious world, now that her beloved offers himself for the first time as a *man*, now that "the dead awaken," awaken to real life and to the happiness of love. And, in Ibsen's opinion, Rubek too was dead, confined in a cavern together with cold wet clay and cold hard marble, killing in his heart "the happiness of life, of love" by spectral, empty ideas. Ibsen makes him say :

"Yes, is not life in sunshine and in beauty a hundred times better worth while than to hang about to the end of your days in a raw, damp hole, and wear yourself out in a perpetual struggle with lumps of clay and blocks of stone ?"

Rubek was dead, when in Irene, the woman glowing with love, he saw only an idea, an artistic ideal. He was dead when he spent his time by the side of a being, Maya, for whom he felt no love. He wants to awake to life and not merely to play and play, as they used to do during the beautiful evenings by the Taunitz Lake, but he wants to live really for once, though it be but for once, in the rapture and ecstasy of love, with his own being's other half. But here also the fatal influence of an ideal point of view makes itself felt, here also both rise too high in the intoxication of their rapture, for, instead of building up a secure happiness in the valley, they climb upwards, in spite of threatening mountain mist and snow-storm, to be crushed by the avalanche and hurled into the abyss.

"Professor Rubek.

(throwing his arms violently around her) Then let two of the dead—us two—for once live life to its uttermost—before we go down to our graves again !

Irene.

(with a shriek) Arnold !

Professor Rubek.

But not here in half darkness ! Not here with this hideous dank shroud flapping around us—

Irene.

(carried away by passion) No, no—up in the light, and in all the glittering glory ! Up to the Peak of Promise !

Professor Rubek.

There we will hold our marriage-feast. Irene—oh, my beloved !

Irene.

(proudly) The sun may freely look on us, Arnold.

Professor Rubek.

All the powers of light may freely look on us—and all the powers of darkness too. (Seizes her hand) Will you then follow me, oh my grace-given bride ?

Irene.

(as though transfigured) I follow you, freely and gladly, my lord and master !

Professor Rubek.

(drawing her along with him) We must first pass through the mists, Irene, and then—

Irene.

Yes, through all the mists, and then right up to the summit of the tower that shines in the sunrise.

(The mist-clouds close in over the scene—Professor Rubek and Irene, hand in hand, climb up over the snow-field to the right and soon disappear among the lower clouds. Keen storm-gusts hurtle and whistle through the air. . . . Suddenly a sound like thunder is heard from high up on the snow-field, which glides and whirls downwards with rushing speed. Professor Rubek and Irene can be dimly discerned as they are whirled along with the masses of snow and buried in them.)"

In contrast to these two people wavering between a true impulse of life and idealism, we find the other couple, Ulfheim and Maya, far removed from all ideal endeavour, solely and simply bent upon enjoying to the full the true and real life, on draining the cup of existence to the dregs. In this desire for life and love they soon find, and hold to, each other.

With the most subtle intention the two women closely connected with the idealistic dreamer Rubek are called Maya and Irene, in conformity with their opposite characters, Maya means the fertile, the motherly, the productive woman, but also, according to the Hindu idealistic conception, the varied, deceptive material world enticing to restless desire and consuming passion, to conflict and discord, to the idealist merely empty delusion, but to the individualist ultimate reality and truth. It is the *veil of Maya* which, according to the idealistic conception, hides from men the truth that the too ardent pursuit of earthly happiness is but an error, that all the good things of this world are incapable of appeasing the heart's deepest desire which really aims at an infinite good.

Irene, on the other hand, the Greek word, means peace, compromise, harmony, the association of a plurality of individuals into the ideal bond of a higher unity, the essence of the ideal itself. The individual, ruled by the ideal of a higher life and full of longing to be absorbed in it, is inclined to renounce his individual contrasts and peculiarities and, instead of preserving his peculiarity in a struggle with neighbouring individuals, would rather peacefully combine with them to produce a higher whole. But in peace the individualist sees death, and in the renunciation of his individual peculiarities, appetites, and inclinations the destruction of his individual existence. In his participation in the higher whole the individualist does not see the greatest advantage to, but the loss of, his real life. Peace is possible only under lawful conditions, where each single person adapts himself to others according to these laws. But this friendly adaptation in favour of a higher, ideal whole is death to the individualist. Accordingly Ibsen writes to George Brandes, "The State is the curse of the individual," the State with its legal, peaceful order. Therefore Irene, the ideal peace that brings death, is the name given to the woman who serves the idealistic dreamer, "artist," and "poet," as Muse.

Maya, on the contrary, the representative of the individualistic world of the senses, which entices to desire, conflict, and discord, allies herself with Ulfheim, the bear-hunter, the enemy to all idealistic illusion, who can only conceive of life as a continual chase, a ceaseless conflict, the wilder the better. He never feels more alive than when he can use his knife, when he can assert his individual existence in opposing and destroying a dangerous antagonist. "There's not a bit of the artist about him." For, in Ibsen's opinion, to be an artist is equivalent to seeking a dead peace in the ideal, to transforming the real, individual life into an ideal, aesthetic illusion. But to be a man is to be a fighter, continually to assert one's individual existence in conflict with bears or with men. Indeed the poet, too, the artist in general, has to master the object before him. Professor Rubek "struggles with his marble blocks," and Ulfheim "struggles with tense and quivering bear-sinews." "And we both of us win the fight in the end—subdue and master our material," says the bear-killer. But the mastering of the lifeless material of marble blocks remains after all a poor substitute for the mastering of *living* material. According to the individualistic or anarchistic view, a true consciousness of one's own life can only be acquired by the suppression and destruction of another life. And the fuller, the stronger, the more self-conscious is the life of the other individual, the sweeter will it be to trample it underfoot. Therefore Nietzsche calls *cruelty* the fundamental instinct and the primal impulse of the "masters," their "great joy and delight." But lifeless marble cannot *feel* how it is "mastered."

According to the idealistic conception, it is Satan who leads one away from the true, ideal life in God and from peace of mind to the violent, ceaseless conflict of the passions in the alluring, seductive material world, to the death of the soul. According to the individualistic view, on the contrary, life in the ideal is no life, but death. Satan, who turns man away from God, from the empty, life-destroying ideal, is therefore man's real benefactor and real friend. Therefore Nietzsche calls "God our *oldest lie*," and contrariwise the father of lies, Satan, the "oldest friend of knowledge," that is, of the knowledge of the true value of individual life. Thus it is the idealistic dreamer Rubek who is the real tempter, the real liar. Satan spoke the truth, in Ibsen's opinion : the kingdoms of the world and their glory are real life to the individual, but by his idealistic dreams Rubek only allures to high and desert plains of ice and snow where all life grows torpid and perishes. Compare the following passages :

"Maya

But do you remember what you promised the day we came to an understanding on—on that difficult subject . . . You said you would take me

up to a high mountain and show me all the glory of the world . . . And all that glory should be mine, you said."

Again :

"Irene

I fell down at your feet and served you, Arnold !"

Again :

"Professor Rubek.

Did I not promise to take you up with me to a high mountain and show you all the glory of the world ?"

Again :

"Irene

(smiles as though lost in recollection) I once saw a marvellously lovely sunrise.

Professor Rubek.

Did you ? Where was that ?

Irene.

High, high up on a dizzy mountain-top. You beguiled me up there by promising that I should see all the glory of the world if only I—

Professor Rubek.

If only you—? Well ?

Irene.

I did as you told me—went with you up to the heights. And there I fell upon my knees, and worshipped you, and served you. (Is silent for a moment ; then says softly) Then I saw the sunrise."

Ibsen's significance for our time is much greater than is commonly assumed. Conflict is the father of all things, says Heraclitus. And it is the old conflict between the antisophic, sophistic, or individualistic view of life and the truly philosophic or idealistic view which once more flames up, and from which truth is to arise again rejuvenated. Ibsen is one of the greatest leaders of individualism.

THE PHILOSOPHY AND TECHNIQUE OF SATYAGRAHA

Nirmal Kumar Bose

WILLIAM JAMES was not only a great psychologist but he was also a great man. He loved mankind and hated war. But he also knew that war had certain merits : it developed the sense of responsibility and discipline, comradeship and courage as hardly anything else could. But he recognised that the advantages of war were more than offset by the sufferings and degradations which came inevitably in its train. So he tried to find some "moral equivalent of war" which would influence human character beneficially in the same way as war, but for which we would not have to pay as dearly as in the case of war. The phrase quoted above was probably of William James's coinage, and in an essay written many years ago, he suggested that instead of making war itself tabu, we should rather change its direction. Instead of allowing men to waste their lives in fighting against one another, we should rather train them to battle with the forces of nature so that human life may be made richer and happier.

William James died four years before the great European War, in which America later on joined to take her due share. It was proof that the lesson of the great psychologist had fallen upon stony ground even in his own country. It would certainly have been very good if all human beings had taken his lesson to heart, but unfortunately they did not do so. And one of the principal reasons of the failure was that the proposed "equivalent" did not in any way help to solve the quarrels and antagonisms of mankind where they actually existed. If all men had already possessed the sense of human brotherhood, if they had realized from the start that it was in the welfare of the whole that the welfare of each part also lay, then they might have turned their energy to a better purpose than wasting it in war. But when that sense itself was lacking, when groups of men rather hoped to hold for themselves all the good things of the earth with the aid of the sword, when selfishness was burning fiercely within, the highly moral lesson of William James sounded more like an utopian's dream than any ideal capable of practical realization.

It is just here that the method of non-violent non-co-operation steps in as a really effective substitute of war. It does not propose to do away with war, it does not charm men away from the reality of worldly conflicts ; but it raises the quality of those very conflicts by bringing into operation a spirit of love and a sense of human brotherhood. Satyagraha is not a

substitute for war ; it is war itself shorn of many of its ugly features and guided by a purpose far nobler than what we generally associate with destruction. It is itself an intensely heroic and chivalrous form of war.

The first article of faith with the Satyagrahi is the need of recognising and of loving all mankind as one. The Satyagrahi also holds that love is never consistent with exploitation in any shape or form. Exclusive possession can never go together with love. If we have love in us, we can only possess when everyone else can also possess the same thing if he needs it. In accordance with this fundamental belief, the Satyagrahi holds that whenever there is a conflict of interests in human society, there must be something wrong somewhere. And if we can look into the situation with patience enough, a way can surely be found to restore the sense of human unity, and, at the same time, to serve the best interests of humanity taken as a whole. It will be a way illumined by love and one in which there would be no room for exploitation of any human being.

The Satyagrahi also believes that such a solution can be best arrived at if he himself and his adversary can somehow put their heads together. But the adversary can hardly be made to realize the injustice of his position by mere talking and argumentation. If we shoot him dead or cow him down by violence, it does not help the cause very much. Fear demoralizes and raises fresh barriers to better understanding in the hearts of men in authority today. Pride and self-defence stiffen their back, and make them less amenable to reason, justice and fair play. The Satyagrahi has therefore to devise some means of dealing with them effectively ; and it is through self-suffering that he proposes to do so.

Let us explain what the Satyagrahi exactly understands by self-suffering. It has already been said that the first law of the Satyagrahi is the law of love. The second law, which follows from love, is that the way to the adversary's head is not through the head, but through the heart. He believes that it is only through suffering, voluntarily and cheerfully endured, that the way can be opened to better understanding and a due recognition, on the part of the adversary, of the injustice of his own position. The Satyagrahi knows that all systems of exploitation thrive in the world because both the exploiter and the exploited co-operate in their maintenance. The exploited do so through fear, but they co-operate with the exploiters all the same. It is just here that the Satyagrahi sees his best opportunity of voluntary suffering. He tries to wreck the system of exploitation by refusing to co-operate with it, and thus draws upon his devoted head all the repression his adversary is capable of administering. If he stands unmoved through the shower of repression, his sufferings heroically endured are likely to touch the heart of the oppressor and thus pave the way for mutual

discussion and a joint effort to build up a social system without the injustices of the present. It may also happen that the Satyagrahi fails to touch the heart of the exploiter with all his suffering. But even then his endeavours need not go in vain. For continued non-co-operation will bring about the downfall of any system, whether the Satyagrahi eventually succeeds in gaining the good will and co-operation of the exploiter or not. No system can endure with non-co-operation all the while cutting away the ground from under it.

The suffering which the Satyagrahi voluntarily endures must not be endured mechanically. All through the struggle it must be illumined by a sense of human love. If that love does not remain steady but grows dim, then there is surely something wrong with the Satyagrahi in his intellectual side. Only when love grows and the conviction also grows that all mankind is after all one, can one be sure that one is on the right path. For the faith in the essential unity of man is not merely the starting point of Satyagraha, its complete intellectual and emotional realization is also the aim of the process. It is only when that realization is complete can the Satyagrahi claim that he has done his utmost for the increase of human happiness. Resistance shorn of love only degrades, and love shorn of understanding never succeeds in elevating mankind.

One may, however, object that the path of resistance thus chalked out is an endless one, and requires almost superhuman patience for its due performance. Why should we waste our efforts in redeeming those who exploit mankind, they who have very little of the better stuff of humanity left in them ? May we not then use the minimum amount of violence, just enough to capture the State, and then build up a better humanity through better education ? Once we have the State within our grasp, we can train people up in unselfishness and also place legal and constitutional checks upon the exercise of selfishness. Gandhiji agrees partly with his socialist critics when they argue in this way. He would say, Yes, we have to capture the State and that is why we are fighting for the attainment of Swaraj in India. But the process by which we can wrest authority from those in power need not be one of violence. Non-violence is more than enough for that purpose. And in that process of non-violent non-co-operation, we start to educate ourselves as well as our opponents in unselfishness from the very beginning. We need not have to wait until the battle is over. Satyagraha blesses him who uses it as well as him against whom it is used. It is a process of self-purification for the Satyagrahi, while it also stimulates the latent human qualities within his opponent's breast. The non-co-operating warrior thus steals a march over his brother who uses violence by being able to employ the educative process from the beginning of his fight for power.

But this is not the only argument in favour of love or non-violence. Mahatma Gandhi also believes that one who uses the sword also perishes by the sword. If we have to depend not upon our ability of self-sacrifice but upon external violence for the success of our cause, then one who can wield greater violence may claim that justice lies on his side. Success through violence blinds us to our own faults ; and this spirit of self-righteousness, devoid of the spirit of self-examination, is the greatest condemnation that Gandhi can think of against the school of violence. Success through violence is no proof of Truth and ultimately leads to Untruth. So Gandhi holds it as a fundamental proposition that it is only through non violence that we should combat violence, and it is only love which can overcome hate. It is only a full sense of unity which can combat and ultimately overwhelm the selfish and sectional spirit of mankind.

And for this purpose. he has devised a technique or an organized method which we shall now proceed to describe in some detail.

It has already been said that the road of the Satyagrahi lies through suffering voluntarily endured. But the most important thing about it is that the suffering should come in a progressive manner, just as our non-co-operation should also be progressive in character. "The secret of non-violence and non-co-operation lies in our realising that it is through suffering that we are to attain our goal. What is the renunciation of titles, councils, law-courts and schools but a measure (very slight indeed) of suffering ? That preliminary renunciation is a prelude to the larger suffering, the hardships of gaol life and even the final consummation on the gallows, if need be. The more we suffer, and the more of us suffer, the nearer we are to our cherished goal."[1] A Congress worker once asked Gandhiji how long he could continue on starvation allowance. Gandhiji promptly replied, "Till death even as a soldier fights till he is victorious or, which is the same thing, drops down dead."[2] For the Satyagrahi personally, there is no time limit nor is there any limit to his capacity of suffering.[3]

But Gandhiji never prescribes the same dose for the masses as he prescribes for the professional Satyagrahi. As a practical leader of men he recognizes that "suffering has its well-defined limits. Suffering can be both wise and unwise, and, when the limit is reached, to prolong it would be not unwise, but the height of folly."[4] He never engages the masses in a programme which is likely to bring about defeat and demoralization. He prescribes for them a step which is just beyond their reach. And in order to

1. *Young India*, 29. 9. 21.
2. *Y. I.* 24. 7. 24.
3. *Y. I.* 19. 2. 25.
4. *Y. I.* 12. 3. 31.

attain their immediate objective, the masses have to exercise their limbs not to the breaking point, but sufficiently to create in them a sense of self-confidence and leave them stronger to carry on their further struggle. Whenever there is a chance of demoralization, Gandhiji orders a retreat, and he has never been ashamed of doing so as often as the situation has demanded. Even as early as 1920, he said that he was not going to take a single step in non-co-operation unless he was satisfied that the country was ready for it.[1]

But behind the moderation of a great leader, there is always the intention to lead the whole nation until it is ready to die like one man, if necessary, for the benefit of humanity. "Just as the cult of patriotism teaches us that the individual has to die for the village, the village for the district, the district for the province and the province for the country, even so a country has to be free in order that it may die, if necessary, for the benefit of the world. My love therefore of nationalism or my idea of nationalism is that my country may die so that the human races may live."[2] Only, the path to that lies through successive stages.

Many have complained that Gandhiji is no revolutionary but a reformist. Perhaps they are wrong. For a 'reformist marches from one advantage to another, from one morsel of food snatched from the enemy power anyhow to a second one. But Gandhiji leads men not from one small gain to another, but from one danger to a still greater one, from one sacrifice to yet another which calls forth greater courage, greater forbearance and a greater faith in the brotherhood of man. There is, of course, a gain ; but the gain is more often subjective than objective in quality. Gandhiji is prepared to rest on his oars, but he is never prepared to lay them down until he is satisfied that the nation now rests with death as its pillow.[3] For that is the final test of whether the nation has become worthy of enjoying the good things of life or not. What more can a revolutionary demand, for he also leads men through the portals of death to final victory ? Gandhiji once said in this connection, "Some have called me the greatest revolutionary of my time. It may be false but I believe myself to be a revolutionary, a non-violent revolutionary. My means are non-co-operation."[4] "I have concerned myself principally with the conservation of the means and their progressive use."[5]

This then is the first law of the practice of Satyagraha. It is this

1. *Y. I.* 18.8.20.
2. *Gandhiji in Indian Villages*, by Mahadev Desai, p. 170.
3. *Indian Home Rule*, p. 101.
4. *Y. I.* 26.11.31.
5. Correspondence with Pandit Jawaharlal published in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of 17. 9. 33.

that non-co-operation must start with little things calculated to force the masses to brave dangers of a mild type and to develop in them a certain measure of courage and self-sacrifice. But the Satyagrahi must so advance that ultimately the masses face the fear of death without losing courage and without bitterness in their heart. It is then alone that the goods for which they are fighting will come within their grasp.

Another important feature of the Satyagrahi's code is that in putting forward any legitimate demand, he always tries to make it the irreducible minimum.[1] The Satyagrahi personally must be entirely satisfied about the justice of his claims ; but even after that, he must keep it as small as possible. Perhaps if he held forth a larger demand, his adversary might be frightened into yielding smaller concessions. But that is not the way of the Satyagrahi. He refuses to stampede his opponents into surrender. He expects even them to recognize the justice of his claims, and incidentally he also thus enlists world-opinion in his own favour. There is also an additional advantage. When the demands are high, even when they are just, partial concessions by the adversary are likely to create divisions within his own rank. But if the demands are low, and consistent with justice, the chances of rift in the ranks of Satyagrahis are very much reduced. In connection with the history of Satyagraha in South Africa, Gandhiji said, "In a pure fight, the fighters would never go beyond the objective when the fight began, even if they received an accession to their strength in course of the fighting and, on the other hand, they could not give up their objective, if they found their strength dwindling away."[2]

In this connection Gandhiji also sounded a note of warning ; his words are worthy of being quoted in full. In 1922, when everyone was anxiously expecting him to launch the campaign of non-payment of taxes, he said, "We must not resort to non-payment because of the possibility of a ready response. The readiness is a fatal temptation. Such non-payment will not be civil or non-violent, but it will be criminal and fraught with the greatest possibility of violence. Not until the peasantry is trained to understand the reason and the virtue of civil non-payment and is prepared to look with calm resignation upon the confiscation of their holdings and the forced sale of their cattle and other belongings, may they be advised to withhold payment of taxes".[3] "There need be no mistake about our goal. The masses are our sheet-anchor. We shall continue patiently to educate them politically till they are ready for safe action. As soon as we feel reasonably confident of non-violence continuing among them in spite of

1. *Y. I.* 2.4.25.
2. *History of Satyagraha in South Africa*, p. 412.
3. *Y. I.* 26.1.22.

provoking executions, we shall certainly call upon the sepoy to lay down his arms and the peasantry to suspend payment of taxes".[1]

The fourth rule for the Satyagrahi is that he should always be prepared to come to terms with his adversary. "He does not let slip a single opportunity for settlement, and he does not mind if anyone therefore looks upon him as timid. The man who has faith in him and the strength which follows from faith, does not care if he is looked down upon by others. He relies solely upon his internal strength. He is therefore courteous to all, and thus cultivates and enlists world opinion in favour of his own cause."[2] "A Satyagrahi bids good-bye to fear. He is therefore never afraid of trusting his opponent. Even if the opponent plays him false twenty times, the Satyagrahi is ready to trust him the twenty-first time, for an implicit trust in human nature is the very essence of his creed."[3]

Behind his non-co-operation there is always the desire to co-operate on the slightest pretext even with the worst of enemies.[4] But he never surrenders his fundamentals. "Having fixed one's minimum, from which one may not recede, one may stoop to conquer the whole world."[5] Not that he has never been let down. "It is true that I have often been let down. Many have deceived me and many have been found wanting. But I do not repent of my association with them. For I know how to non-co-operate, as I know how to co-operate. The most practical, the most dignified way of going on in the world is to take people at their word, when you have no positive reason to the contrary."[6]

Thus Gandhiji exercises his faith in human nature. And he has successfully conquered by this means some who formerly considered him as their enemy. But quite apart from the moral aspect of it, this method has also a very great strategical importance in civil disobedience. By always being prepared to come to terms with the enemy, one can easily shift the blame of precipitating a conflict upon one's adversary when there is a breakdown of negotiations. Gandhiji advises that we should always try to place the adversary in the wrong ; and it is through this readiness to compromise that he successfully does so. In any conflict, the value of this strategical move cannot be gainsaid.

We have already said that Satyagraha is a moral form of war. That also implies that Satyagraha cannot be maintained at a high pitch for an

1. *Y. I.* 9. 3. 21.
2. . . . *South Africa*, p. 442.
3. . . . *South Africa*, p. 246.
4. *Y. I.* 4.6.25.
5. *Y. I.* 2.4.25.
6. *Y. I.* 26.12.24.

indefinite length of time. It has to be alternated with peace-time activity calculated to develop those particular qualities which are useful in periods of intensive non-co-operation. For this, there can hardly be anything better than constructive work, intelligently carried out, along lines often suggested by Gandhiji after the campaigns of 1921 and 1931. These activities serve to consolidate the masses, create trust between them and their leaders, train them into habits of courage, and endurance, in such a manner that Gandhiji once compared them to what drilling etc. does for an army meant for war in the ordinary sense.

A short while before the Salt Movement of 1930, he wrote, "I know that many have refused to see any connection between the constructive programme and civil disobedience. Constructive programme is not essential for local civil disobedience for specific relief as in the case of Bardoli. Tangible common grievance restricted to a particular locality is enough. But for such an indefinable thing as Swaraj people must have previous training in doing things of all-India interest. Such work must throw together the people and their leaders whom they would trust implicitly. Trust begotten in the pursuit of continuous constructive work becomes a tremendous asset at the critical moment. Constructive work therefore is for a non-violent army what drilling etc. is for an army designed for bloody warfare. Individual civil disobedience among an unprepared people and by leaders not known to or trusted by them is of no avail, and mass civil disobedience is an impossibility. The more therefore the progress of the constructive programme, the greater is the chance for civil disobedience."[1]

After the Non-co-operation Movement subsided, Gandhiji said in 1925, "Hasty non-co-operation can only lead to harm. Individuals must cultivate the spirit of service, renunciation, truth, non-violence, self-restraint, patience, etc. They must engage in constructive work in order to develop those qualities."[2] "The pilgrimage to Swaraj is a painful climb. It requires attention to details. It means vast organising ability, it means penetration into the villages solely for the service of the villagers. In other words, it means national education, *i.e.*, education of the masses. It will not spring like the magician's mango. It will grow almost unperceived like the banyan tree. A bloody revolution will never perform the trick. Haste here is most certainly waste."[3]

In his *History of Satyagraha in South Africa*, Gandhiji said something about the connection between newspapers and Satyagraha which deserves careful attention. "I believe that a struggle which chiefly relies upon internal

1. *Y.I.* 9.1.30.
2. *Y.I.* 8.1.25.
3. *Y.I.* 21.5.25.

strength cannot be wholly carried on without a newspaper, and it is also my experience that we could not perhaps have educated the local Indian community, nor kept Indians all over the world in touch with the course of events in South Africa in any other way, with the same ease and success as through *Indian Opinion*, which therefore was certainly a most useful and potent weapon in our struggle.

"As the community was transformed in course of and as a result of the struggle, so was *Indian Opinion*."[1]

In spite of having given so much careful and detailed instruction to his followers, Gandhiji always advises us not to precipitate campaign where it can be avoided. His final instruction to all non-co-operators is as follows :

"Since Satyagraha is one of the most powerful methods of direct action, a Satyagrahi exhausts all other means before he resorts to Satyagraha. He will therefore constantly and continually approach the constituted authority, he will appeal to public opinion, educate public opinion, state his case calmly and coolly before everybody who wants to listen to him, and only after he has exhausted all these avenues will he resort to Satyagraha. But when he has found the impelling call of the inner voice within him and launches out upon Satyagraha he has burnt his boats and there is no receding."[2]

1. .... *South Africa*, p. 221.
2. *Y.I.* 20.10.27.

ON THE WAY TO JAPAN *

Rabindranath Tagore

I

WHENEVER I have started from Bombay the ship has never delayed to weigh anchor. But in Calcutta one has to go and stay on board overnight, which I don't like. To make the mind stand still when it is on the point of moving is to pit one mental force against another. The narrow borderland between going and staying is the most uncomfortable shelter for the mind

All my relations had gone back home after seeing me on board ; my friends had garlanded me and taken their leave ; yet the boat did not stir. That is, those who should have stayed were gone, and that which should have moved remained stationary.

Every leave-taking carries a pain with it, chiefly because we have to relegate behind the veil of the indefinite, that which we had held definitely familiar in life. This emptiness finds its recompense when we continually fill it with the unknown changed into the known. Moving is the only panacea for the pain of parting : the widening of experience consoles us for the loss of the familiar.

The cabin of a motionless steamer is a double-distilled essence of captivity. We forgive the narrowness of a ship's cabin only because the ship moves. But to keep still in a cabin when the ship is also standing still, is like the covering of the grave over the covering of death.

We slept outdoors at night, but what kind of outdoors was this ? The serried masts of the ship made the sky look like our mythical hero *Bhishma* awaiting his death on the bed of arrows. The emptiness of space was nowhere, yet the definiteness of the realm of matter was lacking also. The lights of the ships suggested a huge bulk without showing any distinct form.

I have always thought that the day belongs to the realm of earth, and the night to the realm of heaven. Man is afraid, man has to work, man wants to see clearly the path that lies at his feet, hence it has been necessary to light such a huge lamp. The gods have no fear, their ways are secret and noiseless, they move in the heavenly halls carpeted with infinite darkness. It is in the darkness of night that the gods show themselves at our window.

* Translated by Indira Devi Chowdhurani from Bengali. The travel-diary was written in 1916.

But when man's workshop lights up and wants to annex even this realm of night, then not only does it tire men, but it tires the heavenly powers that be. We began to pass examinations by keeping awake and burning the midnight oil : we set out to transgress the clear and well-defined frontier laid down for us by sunlight, and thus started the fight between god and man. That the chimneys of man-made factories should blow and blacken the face of heaven with soot is not such a grave offence,—the day is man's own, and if he chooses to blacken it, the gods will not complain—but when man pierces the unbroken darkness of night with his lights, then he trespasses on divine rights. It is as if he would transgress his own proprietary limits, and mark his boundary in the sky with posts of light.

I saw huge preparations for this rebellion against the gods that evening on the river Ganges. Therefore the heavenly blessing of peace did not descend upon the weariness of man. Man wants to say : I too am like the gods, I do not tire. But that is a lie, and therefore he destroys the peace of his surroundings, and defiles even darkness.

The day is adulterated with light ; darkness alone is perfectly pure. The night is like the sea, it is dark, yet free from all impurity. And the day is like the river, it is not dark, yet it is muddy. That evening on the jetty at Kidderpore, even the unfathomable darkness of the night appeared murky to my eyes. It seemed as if the very face of the heavens had fallen.

I was struck by this same sense of discord at the port of Aden. There the sea itself is polluted by being made man's captive. The oil floats upon the surface of the water, and even the sea is unable to destroy all traces of man's refuse. Lying on deck that evening, when I saw even the infinite night defiled, I thought to myself that in days gone by, when Indra's heaven was troubled by the invasion of the Titans, the divine denizens appealed for redress to Brahma,—but what dread deity would now deliver the gods from the smudgy tyranny of man ?

II

Our ship has put out,—"Fair blows the wind and merrily we float on". In floating along two opposites are reconciled in a perfect harmony : we are sitting, and at the same time we are moving on. The object of motion is being accomplished, yet we are not obliged to put our mind to it. Therefore the mind sees completely whatever comes within its range of vision. It sees land and water and sky in one harmonious whole.

Another advantage of this floating vision is that it draws attention, without compelling it. Even if we did not see, it would not matter : we

would not lose our way or fall into a ditch. That is why this floating vision is altogether irresponsible : seeing becomes an end in itself, hence so great, so full of joy. We achieve our object of arriving at the destination without straining at each step ; indeed, during the process we forget the end and enjoy the means. That is why man wants to make beautiful even such necessary things as pots and pans ; their usefulness is the symbol of his needs only, but their beauty is the symbol of his free delight. The usefulness of pots and pans proclaims that man has needs, their beauty proclaims that he has a soul.

Nature appears before me this morning, dressed in an ochre river-robe bordered with green. Here I am essentially a looker-on. If this seer of mine were to express itself in language or lines, that might be literature, that might be art. Perhaps somebody will feel vexed and say : "What is it to me that you see these things ? It will neither appease my hunger, nor cure my malaria, nor help to increase the harvest of my fields." Quite right. What I should see thus is nothing to you. And yet if you are really indifferent to the fact that I am only a seer, then the creation of art and literature has no meaning in this world.

You may ask me,—what should we call this composition that you have been writing so long today ? Literature, or philosophy ? Don't let's call it philosophy. In philosophy, it is the wisdom that is more important, not the person who talks about it. In literature it is this person who is most important and the truth is only a subordinate matter. This ascetic current that winds its way indifferently in front of the green splendour of this earth's courtyard, and beneath this blue sky flecked with white clouds—in all this, it is my seer-self that is chiefly revealed. If it were a question of writing geology or geography, then this self of mine would have had to stand aside. But one-self has an unreasoning need of the other-self, hence whenever we find time we put aside geology, and seek for that self.

In the same way, it is this seer-self of mine that floats through, not only natural scenery, but mental ideas. There, too, the spoken word is secondary, and the speaker of primary importance. Just as I pass along, gazing at the outward form-sequence of the universe, so do I pass along gazing with my mind's eye at the sequence of thoughts and ideas flowing within me. This sequence is not guided by any particular work or need. It is not even held together chiefly by logic ; I myself am the principal connecting thread. So I don't care whether my propositions will be accepted by others as cogent maxims on literature or not. My business is to speak out the unnecessary joy counted by the words "I see" in the outer universe and in my mental world. If I can express this feeling clearly, then all the other groups of ego will be glad without any reason.

In the Upanishads, it is said there are two birds sitting on the same bough, one of which feeds, and the other looks on. The delight of the bird which looks on is the greater, because it is a pure delight, a free delight. There are both these birds in man himself : one bird has needs, the other has no needs. The bird that enjoys itself is a creator.

SS. Toshu Maru.
1st May, 1916.

III

On thursday afternoon the pilot got down at the mouth of the harbour. The identity of the sea had been in evidence for some time beforehand. The shackles of its coast-line had fallen away, but its earthen colour had not yet disappeared. It had not yet been demonstrated that the sea bore a nearer relation to the sky than to the earth.

We have several deck-passengers on the lower deck of this boat ; they are mostly Madrasis, and they are nearly all going to Rangoon. They are not at all badly treated by the ship's crew, and are quite happy. They were mightily glad to receive a painted paper-fan each from the ship's store-room.

Many of them are Hindus, so it is beyond human power to relieve many of the hardships endured by them in travelling, which are part of the divine heritage of their caste. They manage to live somehow by chewing sugar-cane, and eating parched rice. What strikes one very forcibly is that they are cleanly on the whole,—but only within the boundary-line of convention ; outside that limit there is nothing to prevent their being dirty. After having chewed sugar-cane, it is easy enough to throw the fibres into the sea, but their custom has not sanctioned that small amount of trouble : they throw the fibres quite close to where they sit and eat, so that heaps of refuse are being collected all round, which they do not seem to mind a bit. What disgusts me most is to see their want of consideration with regard to spitting. Yet whenever there is a question of observing cleanliness according to the law, they take an uncommon lot of trouble over the veriest trifles. If you tighten the chain of custom, you needs must loosen the bonds of reason. If you constrain man from outside, by degrees he loses the power of restraining himself.

There are a few Mahommedans amongst them : they are not particularly careful about cleanliness, but they are very particular about neatness. They like to keep themselves always ready, and well-dressed, with a cap well set. On the slightest acquaintance, or even without it, they salaam you with a pleasant smile on their faces. You can see that they own allegiance to an

outer world. To those who live only within the circle of their own caste, the social world outside that circle appears extremely shadowy. All their restrictions aim at strengthening the bonds of caste. It is because the Mahommedans are not ruled by caste, that they observe certain rules in their dealings with the outside world. Therefore Mahommedans have good manners.

Good manners are the common laws which regulate one's conduct towards all other human beings. In the laws of Manu * one finds rules for the behaviour due to one's parents and aunts and uncles, paternal and maternal, the relative weight to be given to each revered elder, and how the Brahmin, Kshattriya, Vaishya and Sudra should behave towards one another ; but there are no injunctions with regard to general usage between man and man. That is why Western India has learnt to salaam from the Mahommedans, in order to preserve the decencies of life with regard to persons outside the pale of kith- and kin-ship and caste-rules. For the laws relating to the various forms of Hindu salutation apply only to those within the fold of caste.

Either extreme intimacy or extreme distance,—the vast field that exists in between has not yet come well within our control. In fact we deprecate its laws as wanting in cordiality. We forget that we owe something even to those whom we cannot give our hearts to. We stigmatise this gift as artificial, but this common courtesy only seems unnatural to us because we have been brought up in the artificial cage of caste. As a matter of fact, it is only natural for human beings to acknowledge those inside the home as one's own relatives, those immediately outside as one's community, and those outside even that circle as belonging to human society. The ties of the heart, the ties of good manners, and the ties of etiquette,—all three fealties are inherent in human nature.

IV

The captain had warned us that there was going to be a storm that evening,—the barometer was falling. But the sun had sunk to rest in a peaceful sky. The velocity of the wind was higher than what would enable one to call it a balmy breeze, or justify poets in comparing it to a young maiden's gait ; but the music of the waves had not yet attained the terrific beat of clashing cymbals —the few drum-beats it was giving did not even suggest a prelude to the storm. I thought to myself that, like the horoscopes of men, the horoscope of the wind sometimes belies all calculations, and believed that the danger signal of the storm had been averted. So I gave our letters into the pilot's charge, and drawing up my deck-chair, sat facing west to welcome a serene sea.

* The Hindu lawgiver

The rhythm of the wind began to get quicker and quicker, like the clamour of Hindustani durbans at the Holi* festival. There were no clouds as yet in the sky, and the milky way was shining brightly like the foam of the air-ocean.

When I made my bed on deck and lay down, the wind and water had entered the lists for a fine tournament of capping verses ; on the one hand, there was a whistling series of cadenzas, and, on the other, responses in a gurgling tone,—but it did not strike me that the storm was the theme of their melo-drama. Gradually, after exchanging glances with the stars, my eyes closed in sleep.

That night I dreamt I was reciting a Vedic verse about death, and explaining it to somebody. It was a wonderful composition like a great sob, and yet full of the sublime resignation of death. Waking up in the middle of this verse, I found that the sea and sky had become frantic. The sea was dancing like the dread goddess Chamunda with a lolling tongue of foam, and shrieks of wild laughter.

Glancing up at the sky, I saw that the clouds had become desperate. The roaring of the waves was so terrible that it seemed as if even one's own thoughts could not be heard. The sailors were moving about hurriedly here and there with small lanterns in their hands,—but silently. The signal-bell of the man at the helm to the man at the engine was heard from time to time.

I tried to go to bed and sleep. But the roaring of the wind and waves outside, and within me that death-chant found in my dreams, kept sounding all the time. My waking and sleeping seemed to be romping with each other in the wayward manner of the storm and the waves, so that I couldn't make out whether I was awake or asleep.

Up to now the usual routine on board the ship had been followed, and even our breakfast had not encountered any obstruction. The captain's face showed no sign of anxiety. Such things, he said, happened in that season : just as when we see signs of restlessness in youth, we say, it is but natural at this age.

Inside the cabin one would be shaken like peas inside a rattle. Wrapped up in shawls and blankets, we went and sat on deck. The brunt of the storm came from the west, so it was not difficult to sit on the eastern deck. The storm grew apace. The sea had lost its blue colour, all around appeared blurred and pallid. As a child I had read in the Arabian Nights, that when the fisherman took off the lid of the water-pot that had come up in his net,

* A spring festival common to all India, but specially observed in the up-country, when high and low alike squirt liquid red powder at each other, sing suitable songs, and generally enjoy themselves.

a thick volume of smoke rolled out from it and assumed the shape of a huge giant. It seemed to me that somebody had taken off the blue lid of the sea, and hundreds of thousands of giants were coming forth like smoke, and hustling one another as they rose up to the sky.

The Japanese sailors were running to and fro, but there was always a pleasant smile on their lips. From their attitude it would appear that the sea was but teasing the ship with its loud laughter ; the doors and outlets of the western deck were all shut, but in spite of these obstacles the waves of the sea came rushing through every now and again, at which the men burst into peals of laughter. The captain kept telling us repeatedly, "it is a small storm, a very little storm." Once our steward came in and tried to explain to us by drawing on the table with his finger, how the ship had to change her course on account of the storm. In the meantime our shawls and blankets are all wet with the splashing of rain, and we are shivering with cold. For want of a better place I went and took shelter in the captain's room. Judging by outward signs, I couldn't make out that the captain had any anxiety in his mind. . .

I couldn't sit indoors any longer, and came and sat outside again, wrapped in my wet shawl. But it was impossible to stay on deck. On trying to go down, I found the whole passage up to the staircase packed with deck-passengers. Making way through them with the greatest difficulty, I went and lay down in my cabin. Now body and mind felt all in a whirl. It seemed as if the life in me could no longer pull on with the encasing body ; as if it was on the point of being forcibly separated from it like the butter from churned milk. One can bear the rolling on the deck of a steamer, but the rolling inside is hard indeed to bear. It is like the difference between walking barefooted on gravel and walking with gravel in your shoes.

By evening the storm abated. On going upstairs I found there were many signs apparent of the buffetting experienced by the ship. A wall of the captain's room had fallen in, and his things had all got wet. A hanging life-boat had been damaged. A passenger-cabin and a portion of the store-room on deck had collapsed. The Japanese sailors had had to do work which entailed risk of life. That the ship had all along been fighting for life was conclusively proved by one thing—the swimming-belts made of cork were arrayed on deck. At some juncture the captain had evidently thought it necessary to bring these out. But the thing which I recall to mind most clearly in all this storm-drama is the laughter of the Japanese sailors.

On Saturday the sky was serene, but the trouble of the sea was not yet over. Strange to say, the ship had not rolled during the storm so heavily as afterwards. It was as if it couldn't forgive yesterday's disturbance by any means, and kept swelling with sobs. My own body felt very much in the

same condition ; it had somehow kept up during the storm, but the day after it could not forget that a storm had passed over it.

It is Sunday to-day. The colour of the water has become lighter. After all this time I saw a bird in the sky today. It is these birds that carry the message of the earth to the sky : the sky gives its light, the earth its song. The only song the sea has is that of its own waves. In its lap it holds many a creature, many more than the earth does, but none of them possess musical voices,—so the sea itself speaks for all these dumb millions. The sea is the sphere of dance, the earth the sphere of sound.

We are due to reach Rangoon by four or five o'clock this afternoon. From Tuesday to Saturday much news has been passing to and fro on earth, which has remained stored up for us,—not like current coin of business of which daily account is being kept ; but like Government papers whose interest is increasing behind the scenes.

5th May, 1916.

V

We arrived in Rangoon on the afternoon of the 5th.

I have sometimes been requested to take notes and give reports, but all such piecemeal facts slip through my mental grasp and get scattered. I can only deal with the visible when it comes on to the stage of expression, after having become invisible in the green-room of my mind.

It is fruitless and fatiguing for me to rush about here and there, trying to see things. So you will not get a nice traveller's tale from me. I can take my oath in a court of law that I came to a city called Rangoon ; but in that court where a still bigger oath is administered, I must perforce state that I never arrived in Rangoon.

It may be that the city of Rangoon is not a very real thing. The streets are straight, broad and clean ; the houses look spick and span ; Madrasis, Punjabis and Gujratis wander about in the streets, and when one suddenly comes across a Burmese (man or woman) dressed in coloured silks, it strikes one that they are the foreigners. As a matter of fact, as the bridge over the Ganges doesn't belong to it, but seems rather to be a halter round its neck, so the city of Rangoon is not a Burmese city, but appears to be in opposition to the whole country.

First of all, what are the first impressions one gets of Burma when one approaches the city by the river Irrawady ? On its banks I saw huge factories of kerosene oil with tall chimneys raised to the sky, exactly as if they were lying flat on their backs and smoking Burma cheroots ! Then as we proceed, crowds of ships come in view, flying flags of different nations. Then, when we arrive at the landing place, there is no sign

whatever of any river-side,—the rows of piers seem to be clinging to Burma's body like so many hideous iron leeches. Then passing through Government offices, courts, shops and markets, we arrived at the house of my Bengali friends, without catching any glimpse of the real Burma through any loophole. It seemed to me as if Rangoon exists on the map of Burma, but not in the country. That is to say, this city has not risen from its soil like a tree, but has come floating on the current of time like foam.

It is the same with some cities in India. The goddess of commerce is hard, and the lotus of beauty that springs from man's idealism does not bloom beneath her feet. She does not look at men, she wants only things,—and the machine is her own special mount. When our boat was coming up the Ganges, signs of her shameless cruelty were evident on both banks of the river. It is because her heart knows no tenderness that she has been able so lightly to deface the lovely banks of the Ganges in Bengal.

I consider it to be an inestimable privilege to have been born before the iron flood of ugliness hastened to drown both sides of the river near Calcutta, from Garden Reach to Hooghly. Then the landing places of the Ganges, like cool arms of the village, still used to hold the river to their breast in a familiar embrace; and the factory ferry-boats still used to go from one landing to another, carrying each one back to his home in the evening. No hard and ugly barrier had yet been built between the flow of the country's heart on the one side, and the flow of this country river on the other.

In those days there was nothing yet to prevent one from seeing the real aspect of Bengal round about Calcutta. Hence, though Calcutta is a modern city, it had not, like a young *koil*, * occupied the whole of its foster-mother's nest to the exclusion of everything else. But in course of time, the appearance of the country gradually became hidden beneath the growth of commercial civilization. Now Calcutta is banishing the real Bengal from its outskirts; in the struggle between time and place it is the green loveliness of the place that was defaced by the fierce figure of time that spread out its iron nails and claws, and belched forth its black breath.

Once upon a time men used to say that the goddess Lakshmi† dwells in trade. Then they saw the goddess revealed not only in her splendour, but also in her beauty. Because in those days man was not yet separated from trade, there was a communion of spirit between the weaver and his loom, the smith's hand and the smith's hammer, the artisan and his work

* The Indian cuckoo, which is supposed to lay its eggs in the nest of the crow.

† Goddess of plenty and beauty.

of art. So the heart of man used to express itself through trade in varied forms of richness and beauty. How else could Lakshmi have got her lotus-throne ?

But ever since the machine became its vehicle, trade has become godless. If one compares modern Manchester with ancient Venice, the difference will become apparent. In the splendour and beauty of Venice, man had revealed himself ; in Manchester man has stultified himself on all sides and revealed his machine. Therefore, wherever this machine-ridden trade has gone, it has spread a pestilence of greed throughout the world with its soot and ugliness and cruelty. It has given rise to no end of struggling and fighting, it has polluted society with falsehood, and made the earth slippery with bloodshed. The goddess of plenty has changed into the dread goddess Kali ; her serving ladle has now become a scimitar for drawing blood, and her sweet smile has turned into wild laughter.

Hence do I say that I saw Rangoon, but only with my eyes ; in that seeing there was no knowing. I have brought with me thence recollections of my Bengali friends' hospitality, but haven't succeeded in bringing away any gift from the hands of Burma. Or perhaps this statement is somewhat exaggerated. Amidst this wall of modernism, one day I found a window of the country slightly open. On Monday morning my friends took me to the famous Buddhist temple of the place. At last I saw something. Hitherto I had been surrounded by an abstraction, by a hidden something. It was a city, but not a particular city. What I saw now had a special appearance of its own. So the whole of my mind was gladdened and awake.

In modern Bengali houses I sometimes meet very fashionable young ladies ; they walk quite stylishly and talk English quite fluently. But one misses something very real in them ; one feels that the real Bengali girl is lost sight of and fashion alone is being personified. If at the next moment you suddenly come across a simple and beautiful Bengali woman, unaffected and free from all trappings of fashion, you at once realize that this is no mirage, that like a clear and deep pool of water she bears within her a tremulous fullness that allays thirst, and is edged with lotus-groves. As soon as I entered the temple, I was struck with a similar thrill of joy ; I thought to myself that whatever it may be, this is not hollow, there is ever so much more in it than what little meets the eye. The whole city of Rangoon appeared small in comparison,—the great and ancient land of Brahma (Burma) revealed itself within the limits of this temple.

Firstly, from the glare of the outside world we entered into the ripened gloom of olden times. A broad flight of steps rose in tiers before us, covered with a canopy. On either side they were selling fruit, flowers, candles, and other sundry offerings of worship, the sellers being mostly Burmese

women. The colours of the flowers mingling with the colours of their silk clothes made the shades of the temple variegated like the sky at sunset. Buying and selling are not prohibited, and Mahommedan shop-keepers are displaying their miscellaneous foreign wares. Meat and fish are not excluded either, and domestic concerns, including eating, etc. are being carried on all around. There is no line drawn between the world and the temple, they freely commingle with each other. Only the commotion that prevails in the market is absent here. Here there is no solitude, but there is privacy, no silence, but peace. There was a Burmese barrister in our party, who, when asked why fish and flesh were allowed to be bought and sold and eaten on the temple steps, replied, "Buddha has preached to us, he has told us which way lies man's salvation, and which way lies his bondage ; but he never wanted to make anything good by force ; no good can be done by pressure from the outside, salvation lies in one's own free will ; therefore there is no ritualistic tyranny in our temple or our society."

The steps lead to an open space, over which various temples are scattered. In these temples there is no solemnity, but a jostling crowd of carved images, like a lot of childish playthings. Such strange medley is scarcely met with anywhere else ; it is like a nursery-rhyme, whose metre is no doubt the same throughout, but into which anything and everything enters at will, and there is no necessity of keeping to any sequence of ideas. Here genuine old art exists check-by-jowl with the cheapest and the flimsiest trifles. These people seem to ignore the existence of such a thing as inconsequence of ideas. It is on a par with the wedding-processions of rich men's sons that flood the streets of Calcutta with all kinds of eccentric incongruities, whose object is not to adorn but to display. As a lot of children in the same room make noise, and take delight in it, so are the decorations, the images and the offerings of this temple, like a children's party, which has sound, but signifies nothing. Those gold-mounted and brass-mounted spires of the temple are the shouting mingled with loud laughter of the Burmese children, rippling up to the sky. It is as if they have not yet attained the age of discretion or gravity. The gay-coloured women here attract one's attention most. They are like flowers blooming all over the branches of this country ; like ground-lilies, they cover the whole land, and nothing else meets the eye.

I am told that the men of the country are lazy and ease-loving, and that the work done by men in other lands is nearly all done here by women. At first this might seem to be a heavy burden imposed on the womenfolk,—but the contrary is proved by the result, for they seem to have developed more fully in this atmosphere of toil. Being allowed to go about is not the only liberty, being able to work freely is a still greater liberty for human beings ;

nor is subjection the greatest bondage, it is narrowness of opportunity that makes it the worst cage of all.

It is because the women here have been freed from this cage that they have gained such completeness and self-reliance. They do not apologise to themselves for their own existence. As they are loved for their womanly grace, so are they respected for their free dignity of strength. I first realised that work gives true grace to womanhood, when I saw Santhal* women. They work very hard, but as an artist gives definite shape to an image with hard knocks, so it is the strokes of toil that make these Santhal women's figures so firm and shapely, and give such a glorious freedom to their every movement. The poet Keats says that truth is beauty, that is, the free perfection of truth is beauty. When truth is set free, it naturally finds expression in a beautiful form. The perfection of expression is beauty.

(*to be continued.*)

* An aboriginal tribe near West Bengal.

By Rabindranath Tagore

THE FIFTH VEDA *

By René Guénon

(*With a Foreword to the Works of M. René Guénon by Mr. David MacIver*)

FOREWORD

THERE is a far too general impression in certain circles that orthodox traditional intellectuality cannot be seriously maintained, or cannot be maintained in its entirety, in the face of modern Western science ; in the face of what passes for science in the West, we should perhaps say, since a large part of this so-called science is built upon pure hypothesis and cannot therefore be properly classed as knowledge of any kind. The impression of the impotence of orthodoxy, in the face of its "scientific" adversaries, corresponds no doubt to a certain reality, and one which traditional teaching has always foreseen : the coming of a time when disorder and false ideas would prevail in the world ; but the truth of ideas is plainly unaffected by the numerical preponderance of the ignorant, and the impotence here is actually in man, and not in the traditional standpoint with which he has become unable to identify himself. The impression is illusory then, it is transported outside the realm of human contingencies, where questions of material preponderance have their place, into the realm of pure intellectuality where they have none, and the illusion where it exists, rests upon a double ignorance which the supposedly "scientific" outlook is designed to maintain : ignorance, first and foremost, of what traditional intellectuality really represents, and secondly of what is really represented by the modern Western mentality in its various aspects. The "scientific" outlook, we say, is designed to perpetuate an ignorance of traditional intellectuality, in short of any intellectuality which relates its object to the unity of a transcendent principle ; it is by this rejection of any superior principle that modern science is to be distinguished from the science of any other age, and the civilization of the modern West from that of any other time or place ; it is also by this rejection, or "Liberation" as some like to call it, that modern science loses all real intellectual value, all

*Translated from the original French for the *Visva-Bharati Quarterly* by Mr. David MacIver, who also contributes the above Foreword. This is the second article of M. Guénon to be published in the Journal, the first having appeared in Vol. I, Part III (November 1935—January 1936). While believing that the works of M. Guénon should be better known to Indian readers than they are at present, the Editor wishes it to be clearly understood that the views and theories adopted in the above article or in the Foreword to it are entirely their authors' and in no way commit the Founder or the Editors of this Journal to them. It is for the readers of this Journal to judge of the merit of the ideas and their exposition as presented by their authors—*Ed.*

possibility of synthesizing the multiplicity of facts which it studies in any sort of unity, and all possibility of explaining these facts except in terms of ever-changing hypotheses, which means all possibility of really explaining them at all.

A proper understanding of the modern mentality is something which can only be acquired in the light of orthodox doctrine, and this for at least two reasons, firstly because the modern mentality only exists in virtue of its rejection of orthodoxy, and secondly because nothing can be thoroughly and profoundly understood except in the light of traditional doctrine ; it necessarily follows therefore that those who have deserted their traditional paths for the will-o'-the-wisp of Western ideas are less qualified to know what they themselves are dealing with, and what influences they are serving, than those who have kept themselves rigorously from contact with the West.

Those who have any deep grasp of traditional doctrines can have very little use for modern science, and they do not need much acquaintance with it to convince them of the fact ; in the East, moreover, this science is representative of an alien mentality with which the representatives of tradition have normally no need to concern themselves ; those who are attached to modernism in one form or another are therefore apt to remain unaware that it is actually modern Western science which cannot for a moment be maintained in the face of traditional intellectuality. Perhaps for the most part this does not greatly matter, for those who are attached to modernism would generally be incapable of any profound attachment to tradition, either from a native incapacity of intellect, or else because the prejudices of the modern outlook have stamped them with an incurable deformity of mind. There may be some, however, who would be able and willing to discard the fetters of Western "culture," if they understood its true character ; it is to their attention in particular that we wish to draw the works of M. René Guénon.

These works have a somewhat unique character in modern times : not so much because they are constantly inspired by the purest traditional orthodoxy, which the East has always known and never ceased to know, but because this pure traditional doctrine appears under a Western name, in a Western tongue, and in short because the author's task has been to illuminate the chaos and disorder of the Western mind with it. To express the pure doctrine without distortion in terms of a mentality which is firstly so limited as that of the West in its essential nature, and secondly so profoundly deformed as the result of a long process of decay, is something which calls for a closer acquaintance with Western civilization than any Oriental could acquire in the normal course of events. The importance of M. Guénon's works

to such Orientals as have suffered the influence of the West, lies precisely in his ability to situate the components of modern Western civilization in their proper place by the light of traditional doctrine, and also to situate the traditional civilization of the West, from which modern civilization is not derived by legitimate descent, in its proper place beside the traditional civilization of the East, as an aspect of that perpetual and unanimous primordial tradition from which all are derived.

We have here, in fact, a traditional orthodoxy which transcends the forms of particular traditions, like that of Shri Ramakrishna, but accompanied by a precise and detailed knowledge of different traditions which Shri Ramakrishna never possessed.

The works of M. René Guénon have not yet received much attention in India ; partly, no doubt, because they are written in French and have in only one instance been translated and published in English, and partly, perhaps, because the one translation which has appeared in English is at times defective, and always very far from reproducing the author's characteristic clearness and simplicity of style. To our knowledge these works have only twice been noticed in Indian periodicals: once in *Triveni* (Jan. —Feb., 1935) where they formed the subject of an interesting article entitled "Oriental Knowledge and Occidental Research" by M. André Préau, and once in the *Visva-Bharati Quarterly* (Nov.-Jan., 1935—1936) where a chapter from one of M. Guénon's books, "The Crisis of the Modern World" was presented in translation by Mr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, under the title of "Sacred and Profane Science."

Mr. Coomaraswamy prefaced his translation with a short introductory note in which he identified himself with the traditional standpoint of the author and declared that in his view no one writing in a modern Western tongue "is more significant than René Guénon whose task it has been to expound the universal metaphysical tradition that has been the foundation of every past culture, and which represents the indispensable basis for any civilization deserving to be so called." In detailing the author's works Mr. Coomaraswamy drew particular attention to "Man and his Becoming according to the Vedanta" as "probably the best account of the Vedanta available in any European language"; it is this book which has unfortunately been the victim of an inadequate English rendering. We make particular mention of Mr. Coomaraswamy, because his name commands an attention which our own does not, and also because certain recent works of his, which seem to have been a cause of some perplexity amongst Orientalists, find an almost indispensable complement in the works of M. Guénon.

The article of M. Guénon's which is published in this same issue of the *Visva-Bharati Quarterly*, and to which the present writing may be regarded

in the nature of an Introduction, is characteristic of the author ; it was published last year in the August-September number of *Etudes Traditionnells*, a French periodical to which he is a regular contributor, and we have translated it as a particularly congent proof that the representatives of orthodox intellectuality who are familiar with certain of the pretended "conclusions" of modern science are as much entitled and indeed obliged to disregard them as those who have never heard of them at all : if they concern themselves with such things as the so-called "law of progress," or its corollaries, it can only be to reduce them to whatever vestige of legitimacy they may possess and to demonstrate their intellectual impossibility beyond these limits ; for it is not maintained that Western science is altogether false, but only that its legitimate field is rigorously and fatally limited to the realm of material phenomena, to the exclusion of all that transcends them : this suffices, however, to deprive it of any real intellectual interest.

We must especially emphasize the fact that this article was originally destined for a public which is already familiar with the author's works, and therefore in a position to know exactly what there is behind modern science ; those who lack this advantage may well have a number of more or less serious objections to make, but provided it is not assumed that these cannot be met because they are not met here, then the article may serve its purpose ; we have meant it only as an introduction to the author's works, and of these a very considerable part is devoted to meeting possible objections in advance, so much so that no one who knows them would be likely to complain of a deficiency in this respect. We do not wish to suggest that every possible objection has been met, for if the author confined himself entirely to answering the objections that can be foreseen, the task would probably be enough to absorb all his activities, to the actual exclusion of his principal aim, which is the presentation of orthodox doctrine ; and apart from that the number of possible objections to a point of doctrine is equal to the number of ways of misunderstanding it, and therefore indefinite. But plainly there is no real presumption that an objection cannot be met in the fact that it has not been met explicitly, and actually it will very seldom be found that an objection has not been met by implication and in its germ, as it were, in M. Guénon's works. What must never be lost sight of, in any case, is that where traditional doctrines are concerned one is no longer faced with "profane science," but with "Sacred Science," which rests not upon hypotheses and mere probabilities, but upon absolute metaphysical certainties, and is therefore in a position to answer any objection whatsoever, given the occasion, and provided always that there is anything to be gained by doing so.

David MacIver.

THE FIFTH VEDA

OF the various peculiarly modern errors which we have often had to denounce, one which sets itself most flatly in the way of any proper understanding of traditional doctrines is what may be called "historicalism," which is really only a simple consequence of the "evolutionist" mentality: it consists in the supposition that everything must have started from the crudest and most rudimentary beginnings and subsequently have undergone a progressive elaboration, resulting in the appearance of particular conceptions at given times, the time being always more recent in proportion as the conception is taken to be more elevated; the implication is that ideas of such an elevated order could only be "the product of an already advanced civilization," to use an expression which has become so common as often to be repeated more or less mechanically even by people who are trying to react against this sort of mentality, but who have only "traditionalist" intentions, without any kind of real traditional knowledge. This way of thinking must be countered with the plain statement that it is at its origin, on the contrary, that everything belonging to the spiritual and intellectual sphere is found in a state of perfection, from which it has continuously departed ever since, during the gradual "darkening" which necessarily accompanies every cyclic process of manifestation; this fundamental law which we must be content to recall here without going into further developments, is clearly sufficient to reduce all the conclusions of what is called "historical criticism" to nothing. It is to be further remarked that there is a definite purpose behind "criticism" of this kind, which is to deny the existence and even the possibility of any superhuman element and to treat traditional doctrines themselves as purely human "thought," on exactly the same level as philosophy and the profane sciences; here again no compromise of any sort is possible, the fact being that it is really this profane "thought" which is of such recent origin and which could only have appeared, we may say, as "the product of an already advanced degeneration," to turn the phrase which we quoted further back in an "anti-evolutionist" sense.

Applying these general considerations to the Hindu tradition, it has to be stated, contrary to the opinion of the Orientalists, that what are called "Vedism," "Brahmanism," and "Hinduism" have absolutely no existence; they do not exist, we mean, if they are to be understood as doctrines which have made their appearance and replaced one another at successive epochs, each of them characterized by essentially different, not to say more or less antagonistic conceptions, which have thus arisen one after another as the

outcome of mere "reflection" conceived upon the model of simple philosophical speculation. If the terms "Vedism," "Brahmanism" and "Hinduism" must be maintained, they are to be taken only as so many names for a single tradition ; as such all of them are quite fitting, and the most that could be said is that each refers more specially to a particular aspect of the tradition, but these different aspects are all inseparably connected and cannot be detached from one another in any way. This follows directly from the fact that, in principle, the tradition which we speak of is contained in its entirety in the Veda, and, consequently, that whatever is opposed to the Veda or falsely derived from it is excluded from this tradition, whatever aspect it is viewed under ; the unity and immutability of the doctrine are thus ensured, and this whatever the developments and adaptations which may be occasioned in response to the particular needs and aptitudes of different ages.

It should in fact be clearly understood that the changelessness of the doctrine in itself is no obstacle to any sort of developments or adaptations, so long as these always rest in strict accord with principles ; at the same time, of course, they can never constitute any sort of a "novelty," for in every case it can only be a question of rendering explicit what was always implied in the doctrine from the very beginning, or alternatively of setting forth the same truths in different terms so as to make them more accessible to the mentality of a "darker" age. What could at first be grasped immediately and without difficulty in the actual principle, could no longer be found there by men of later ages, apart from exceptions, so that it became necessary to make up for the general lack of understanding with a profusion of explanations and commentaries, none of which had ever before been needed ; further, as the capacity for direct attainment of pure knowledge continued to dwindle, it became necessary to open up other "ways" which made use of ever more contingent means and thus kept pace, so as to rectify it as far as possible, with the "descent" which continued from age to age as earthly humanity fulfilled its cycle. Hence, for its transcendent ends, one may say that the more the intellectual and spiritual level of humanity declined, the more means it received of attaining them, so that all that offered any possibility might still be rescued, with due allowance for conditions which must necessarily prevail as a result of cyclic laws.

These are the considerations which permit a proper understanding of the place occupied in the Hindu tradition by what is usually given the name of "Tantrism," this place being that of a body of teachings and means of "realization" which are more particularly suited to the conditions of the Kali-Yuga. It would be quite wrong therefore to regard it as a doctrine apart, and even more so as some sort of "system" as Westerners are only

too ready to do ; really it is rather in the nature of a "spirit," if the expression be permitted, which is more or less diffused throughout the whole of the Hindu tradition as it stands at present, and in such a way that it would be almost impossible to attribute exact and clearly defined frontiers to it ; so when it is reflected that the start of the Kali-Yuga goes back far beyond what are recognized as "historical" times, it has to be granted that the actual origin of Tantrism, far from being as "late" as is claimed by some, must of necessity elude the limited means at the disposal of profane investigation. Moreover, when we speak of its origin and make it actually coincide with that of the Kali-Yuga, as we do here, this is only half true ; to be exact, it is only true when it is specified that what is in question is Tantrism as such, we mean as the expression or outward manifestation of something which, like all the rest of the tradition, always existed in principle in the Veda itself, although it was more explicitly formulated and developed in its applications only when circumstances came to require it. It will thus be seen that there is a double point of view to consider here : on the one hand, Tantrism can be found in the Veda itself, because it is contained there in its principle ; but, on the other hand, it cannot correctly receive a name as a distinct aspect of the doctrine until the moment when it is made explicit for the reasons which we have noted, and it is in this explicit aspect and this aspect only that it can be considered as peculiar to the Kali-Yuga.

The name of Tantrism derives from the fact that the teachings which form its basis are set forth in treatises bearing the generic title of *Tantras*, and this name is directly bound up with the symbolism of weaving which we have spoken about elsewhere, for *tantra*, in its strict sense is the "warp" of a cloth ; we have pointed out that words of the same meaning are also to be found in other places applied to Sacred Books. These *Tantras* are often regarded as forming a "fifth Veda," specially destined for men of the Kali-Yuga, and this would be altogether unjustified if they were not derived from the Veda, understood in its strictest sense, as an adaptation to the conditions of a particular epoch ; this we have already explained. It is essential too to grasp that the Veda, in its principal and as it were "timeless" state, is really one, before becoming threefold and fourfold in its expression ; should it then become fivefold at the present day in view of further developments needed for less "open" faculties of understanding, which can no longer work so directly in the realm of pure intellectuality, it is clear that this will not have any greater effect upon its primitive unity, for this is essentially its "perpetual" (*sanātana*) aspect, and therefore independent of the special circumstances of any and every age.

The doctrine of the *Tantras* then is nothing and can indeed be nothing but a development from certain viewpoints, and a perfectly normal one, of

what is already contained in the Veda, for it is thus and thus alone that it can form an integral part of the Hindu tradition, as in fact it does. As for the means of realization (*sādhanā*) prescribed by the *Tantras*, by the same token they can be said to be legitimately derived from the Veda, for they are really only the application and the putting into practice of this doctrine. Every kind of rite, either of capital or subordinate importance, should of course be included amongst such means, and if they seem all the same to wear a certain aspect of "novelty," when contrasted with what preceded them, the reason is that there was no need to conceive of these means in previous ages, except perhaps as mere possibilities, for people had no need of them then, and had others at their disposal which were more suited to their nature. In this there is something exactly comparable to the special development of a traditional science at some given time ; a development of this kind is just as little a spontaneous "appearance" or an "innovation," for here again it can only be a matter of applying principles, and in such principles every application pre-exists at least implicitly and so could at any moment be made explicit, if there were any reason for it ; but in actual fact such a reason is not to be found except in the contingent circumstances which characterize a particular epoch.

Now the impossibility of practising strictly "Vedic" rites, as they were "in the beginning," follows only too plainly from the simple fact that *soma*, which plays a capital part in them, has been lost for a time beyond "historical" reckoning ; and it must be clearly grasped that when we speak of *soma* here, it should be taken to signify a whole body of things, originally manifest and accessible to all, which in the course of the cycle has become hidden, at least from ordinary humanity. From henceforward "substitutes" for these things were needed, which naturally had to be found in a lower sphere than the first ; thus the "supports" by which the possibility of a "realization" was maintained became ever more and more materialized from age to age, keeping pace with the downward march of cyclic manifestation ; a comparison of the ritual uses of wine and *soma*, for instance, would furnish a symbolical example of this. When we speak of "materialization," however, it should not be simply taken in the very narrow sense which is commonest ; as we understand it, it may be said to start as soon as one leaves pure knowledge, which is also the only pure spirituality ; and the appeal to factors pertaining to sentiment or will, for instance, is not one of the least signs of this kind of "materialization," even if such factors are used in a legitimate way ; are used, that is, only as means, subordinated to an end which is always knowledge ; were they not so, indeed, one could no longer speak of "realization" at all, but only of a deviation, an imitation or a parody, all of them things which are rigorously excluded by traditional orthodoxy, whatever form or level it may take.

This last observation of ours is exactly applicable to Tantrism, which generally speaking offers more of an "active" than a "contemplative way," or, in other words, is more associated with "power" than with knowledge; and a particularly significant fact in this connection is the prominence which it gives to what is called the "heroic way" (*vīra-mārga*). The term *vīrya* which is equivalent to the Latin *virtue*, at all events in the acceptation which it had before it was brought down to a "moral" plane by the Stoics, is clearly expressive, in its strict sense, of the essential and, one may say, "typical" quality, not of the Brahman, but of the Kshatriya; and the *vīra* is distinguished from the *paśu*, that is to say the being who is held by the bonds of ordinary existence, less by effective knowledge than by a wilful affirmation of "autonomy," which, according to the use he makes of it, may just as well carry him away from the end, at this stage, as lead him to it. The danger, in fact, is that "power" may be sought for its own sake alone, and so become a hindrance instead of a help, and that the individual may thus come to make himself his own end; it goes without saying, however, that this is simply deviation and abuse, which can never spring from anything but lack of understanding, and for this the doctrine can in no way be held responsible; furthermore, what we say concerns only the "way" in itself, and not the aim, because, we must insist, this is the same in every case, and can never be anything but knowledge, for it is by knowledge and in knowledge only that the being truly "realizes" itself in all its possibilities. It is none the less true for that, that the means offered for attaining this end are stamped; as they must inevitably be, with the special characteristics of the Kali-Yuga: it should be recalled, in this connection that the proper role of the "hero" is always and everywhere depicted as a "quest," which may be crowned with success, it is true, but also may end in a reverse; and the "quest" itself implies the existence, when the "hero" appears, of something which has been lost beforehand and which it is for him to recover; this task, at the completion of which the *vīra* becomes *divya*, may be defined, if one likes, as the search for *soma* or the "draught of immortality" (*amṛta*), whose symbolism incidentally is exactly equivalent to that of the "quest of the Grail" in the west: and by the recovery of *soma* the end of the cycle rejoins its beginning in the "timeless."

BIRTHDAY *

Rabindranath Tagore

MY BIRTHDAY ! With death's passport in hand it has emerged
from its dive into the chasm of nothingness
to breathe a while on the outskirts of existence.†
From the worn-out chain have dropped the beads of the past years
and with this newest birthday
begins the counting of the days of a new-born life.

The welcome offered today to me, a passer-by,
who tries to con the signal of the morning of an unknown star
beckoning him towards an uncharted voyage,
is shared equally by his birthday and the time of his death,
who mingle their lights like those of the morning star
and of the waning moon.
And I shall sing the same chant to both,
to death and to life.

Grant me, Mother Earth, that my life's mirage born of burning thirst
may recede in the farthest horizon
and my unclean beggar's bowl empty into the dust
its accumulated defilements ;
and as I start my crossing to the unrevealed shore
let me never look back with longing
on the last leavings of the feast of life.

Now when in this sleep-laden dusk of the day's end
the meaning is lost of the keen-bladed hunger
with which you had goaded me
to drag life's chariot,
you begin to withdraw your gifts from me one by one.
Slight has grown your need of me
and slight have you made my use
and set on my forehead the stamp of the discarded.

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* The 78th birthday of the Poet. The poem was written in Bengali in last May at Kalimpong. The above translation was first made by Khitish Roy of Santiniketan, though in its present form it has been revised by the poet.—*Ed.*

† Refers to the poet's experience of his recent serious illness, when he lay unconscious for sixty-four hours, hovering between life and death.—*Ed.*

I feel it all and yet I know,
all this contumely of yours will not reduce my worth to nought.
Cripple me, if you will,
shut out all light from my eyes,
shroud me in the shadow of infirmity,
yet in the dilapidated temple of my being
the ancient god will remain enthroned.

Work your havoc and pile up the wreck.
yet in the midst of this ruin
the luminous spot of inward joy will burn bright as ever.
For, it was fed day after day on the heavenly wine
which the gods pour on earth through every sight and sound.
I had loved them all and sung of that love.
That love has lifted me above your bounds,
the love that shall abide, even though its words grow feeble,
defaced by constant use.
On this love of mine have traced their autographs
the pollen of the mango-blossom,
and the dew-cooled fragrance of the *sephalika*,
the twitterings of the *doels* in early dawn
and the rapturous touch of the beloved.

When I take my leave of you, O Earth,
take back from me, carefully reckoning,
all that you had vouchsafed to me,
the outfit and provision for a life's sojourn.
Yet never think that I hold your gifts but slight.
Ever grateful I am to this clay-cast mould
through which I have had my introduction to the Formless.

Whenever I have approached your doors
with the mind free from all coveting,
I have been made welcome to your heart.
I know your gifts are not for the greedy
that you withhold the nectar hidden in your earthen pot
from the ravenous lips of those that hunger obscenely.
You are waiting, O Earth, with your immortal gifts,
to welcome the wayfarer who treads the arduous path of detachment.

The gluttons who lust for flesh,
the traffickers in festering carrion,
have banded today in their orgies of violence,
day and night.

Yet mockery tempts my smile, as of old,
at the pompous folly of the learned,
at the tyranny of the beggarly rich,
at the hideous make-up of the showy,
at the blasphemy that lampoons the divine in Man.

Enough of this. The bell tolls the last hour at your porch,
and my heart responds to the creaking of the opening gates
of farewell.

In this deepening gloom of the twilight,
I will gather what flickering flames remain to light
my fading consciousness,
to offer my last worship to you, O Earth,
under the gaze of the Seven Rishis. *
And the incense of my last silent song will float round you.

Behind me will remain the *nagkeshar*† plant
that has yet to flower,
the anguished heart of this shore yearning in vain for a ferry across,
and love's self-reproach at its tired memory
vanishing behind the screen of daily task.

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* Pleiades.

† In the garden attached to the poet's residence at Santiniketan.

THE APPROACH TO MYSTICISM

Nalini Kanta Gupta*

MYSTICISM is not only a science but also, and in a greater degree, an art. To approach it merely as a science, as the modern mind attempts to do, is to move towards futility, if not to land in positive disaster. Sufficient stress is not laid on this aspect of the matter, although the very crux of the situation lies here. The mystic domain has to be apprehended not merely by the true mind and understanding but by the right temperament and character. Mysticism is not merely an object of knowledge, a problem for enquiry and solution, it is an end, an ideal that has to be achieved, a life that has to be lived. The mystics themselves have declared long ago with no uncertain or faltering voice : this cannot be attained by intelligence or much learning, it can be seized only by a purified and clear temperament.

The warning seems to have fallen, in the modern age, on unheeding ears. For the modern mind, being pre-eminently and uncompromisingly scientific, can entertain no doubt as to the perfect competency of science and the scientific method to seize and unveil any secret of Nature. If, it is argued, mysticism *is* a secret, if there is at all a truth and reality in it, then it is and must be amenable to the rules and regulations of science ; for science is *the* revealer of Nature's secrecies.

But what is not recognised in this view of things is that there are secrecies and secrecies. The material secrecies of Nature are of one category, the mystic secrecies are of another. The two are not only disparate but incommensurable. Any man with a mind and understanding of moderate culture can see and handle the "scientific" forces, but not the mystic forces. A scientist once thought that he had clinched the issue and cut the gordian knot when he declared triumphantly with reference to spirit séances : "Very significant is the fact that spirits appear only in closed chambers, in half obscurity, to somnolent minds ; they are nowhere in the open air, in broad daylight to the wide awake and vigilant intellect !" Well, if the fact is as it is stated, what does it prove ? Night alone reveals the stars, during the day they vanish, but that is no proof that stars are not existent. Rather the true scientific spirit should seek to know why (or how) it is so, if it is so, and such a fact would exactly serve as a pointer, a significant starting ground. The attitude of the jesting Pilate is not helpful even

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* The writer is a disciple of the famous Indian philosopher and *Yogi*, Sri Aurobindo Ghosh and an inmate of the Aurobindo *Asrama* at Pondicherry.—*Ed.*

to scientific enquiry. This matter of the Spirits we have taken only as an illustration and it must not be understood that this is a domain of high mysticism ; rather the contrary. The spiritualists' approach to Mysticism is not the right one and is fraught with not only errors but dangers. For the spiritualists approach their subject with the entire scientific apparatus—the only difference being that the scientist does not believe while the spiritualist believes.

Mystic realities cannot be reached by the scientific consciousness, because they are far more subtle than the subtlest object that science can contemplate. The neutrons and positrons are for science today the finest and profoundest object-forces ; they belong, it is said, almost to a borderland where physics ends. Nor for that reason is a mystic reality something like a mathematical abstraction, $\sqrt{-n}$ for example. The mystic reality is subtler than the subtlest of physical things and yet, paradoxical to say, more concrete than the most concrete thing that the senses apprehend.

Furthermore, being so, the mystic domain is of infinitely greater potency than the domain of intra-atomic forces. If one comes, all on a sudden, into contact with a force here without the necessary preparation to hold and handle it, he may get seriously bruised, morally and physically. The adventure into the mystic domain has its own toll of casualties—one can lose the mind, one can lose one's body even and it is a very common experience among those who have tried the path. It is not in vain and merely as a poetic metaphor that the ancient seers have said

Kṣurasya dhārā niśitā duratyayā ; *

or, *nāyamātmā balahinena labhyaḥ.* †

The mystic forces are not only of immense potency but of a definite moral disposition and character, that is to say, they are of immense potency either for good or for evil. They are not mechanical and *a-moral* forces like those that physical sciences deal with ; they are forces of consciousness and they are conscious forces, they act with an aim and a purpose. The mystic forces are forces either of light or of darkness, either Divine or Titanic. And it is most often the powers of darkness that the naturally ignorant consciousness of man contacts when it seeks to cross the borderline without training or guidance, by the sheer arrogant self-sufficiency of mental scientific reason.

Ignorance, certainly, is not man's ideal condition—it leads to death and dissolution. But knowledge also can be equally disastrous if it is not of the right kind. The knowledge that is born of spiritual disobedience,

* "Sharp as a razor's edge, difficult of going, hard to traverse is that path !"

† "This spirit is a thing no weakling can gain."

inspired by the Dark ones, leads to the soul's fall and its calvary through pain and suffering on earth. The seeker of true enlightenment has got to make a distinction, learn to separate the true and the right from the false and the wrong, unmask the luring *Māra*, say clearly and unfalteringly to the dark light of Lucifer—*apage Satana*, if he is to come out into the true light and command the right forces. The search for knowledge alone, knowledge for the sake of knowledge the path of pure scientific enquiry and inquisitiveness, in relation to the mystic world, is a dangerous thing. For such a spirit serves only to encourage and enhance man's arrogance and in the end not only limits but warps and falsifies the knowledge itself. A knowledge based on and secured exclusively through the reason and mental light can go only so far as that faculty can be reasonably stretched and not infinitely—to stretch it to infinity means to snap it. This is the warning that Yajnavalkya gave to Gargi when the latter started renewing her question ad infinitum : Yajnavalkya said, if you do not stop, your head will fall off.

II

The mystic truth has to be approached through the heart. "In the heart is established the Truth," says the Upanishad : it is there that is seated eternally the soul, the real being, who appears no bigger than the thumb. Even if the mind is utilised as an instrument of knowledge, the heart must be there behind as the guide and inspiration. It is precisely because, as I have just mentioned, Gargi sought to shoot up—like "vaulting ambition that o'erleaps itself" of which Shakespeare speaks—through the mind alone to the highest truth that Yajnavalkya had to pull her up and give the warning that she risked losing her head if she persisted in her questioning endlessly.

For true knowledge comes of, and means, identity of being. All other knowledge may be an apprehension of things but not comprehension. In the former, the knower stands apart from the object and so can envisage only the outskirts, the contour, the surface nature ; the mind is capable of this alone. But comprehension means an embracing and penetration which is possible when the knower identifies himself with the object. And when we are so identified we not merely know the object, but becoming it in our consciousness, we love it and live it.

The mystic's knowledge is a part and a formation of his life. That is why it is a knowledge not abstract and remote but living and intimate and concrete. It is a knowledge that pulsates with delight : indeed it is the radiance that is shed by the purest and intensest joy. For this reason it may be that in approaching through the heart there is a chance of one's getting arrested there and not caring for the still higher, the solar lights ;

but this need not be so. In the heart there is a golden door leading to the deepest delights, but there is also a diamond door opening up into the skies of the brightest luminosities.

For it must be understood that the heart, the mystic heart, is not the external thing which is the seat of emotion or passion ; it is the secret heart that is behind, the inner heart—*antarhṛdaya* of the Upanishad—which is the centre of the individual consciousness, where all the divergent lines of that consciousness meet and from where they take their rise. That is what the Upanishad means when it says that the heart has a hundred channels which feed the individual vehicle. That is the source, the fount and origin, the very substance of the true personality. Mystic knowledge,—the true mystic knowledge which saves and fulfils—begins with the awakening or the entrance into this real being. This being is pure and luminous and blissful and sovereignly real, because it is a portion, a spark of the Divine Consciousness and Nature : a contact and communion with it brings automatically into play the light and the truth that are its substance. At the same time it is an uprising flame that reaches out naturally to higher domains of consciousness and manifests them through its translucid dynamism.

The knowledge that is obtained without the heart's instrumentation or co-operation is liable to be what the Gita describes as Asuric. First of all, from the point of view of knowledge itself, it would be, as I have already said, ego-centric, a product and agent of one's limited and isolated self, easily put at the service of desire and passion. This knowledge, whether rationalistic or occult, is, as it were, hard and dry in its constitution, and oftener than not, negative and destructive—withering and blasting in its career like the desert simoom.

There are modes of knowledge that are occult—and to that extent mystic—and can be mastered by practices in which the heart has no share. But they have not the saving grace that comes by the touch of the Divine. They are not truly mystic—the truly mystic belongs to the ultimate realities, the deepest and the highest,—they, on the other hand, are transverse and tangential movements belonging to an intermediate region where light and obscurity are mixed up and even for the greater part the light is swallowed up in the obscurity or utilised by it.

The mystic's knowledge and experience is not only true and real : it is delightful and blissful. It has a supremely healing virtue. It brings a sovereign freedom and ease and peace to the mystic himself, but also to those around him, who come in contact with him. For truth and reality are made up of love and harmony, because truth is, in its essence, unity.

THE TEACHER IN A SOCIETY IN TRANSITION

Dr. A. Aronson, B.A. (Cantab.)

WHENEVER cultural standards and social and economic values have to undergo changes within a social group we speak of a society in transition. We find such societies in transition throughout Europe during the last century. It is a remarkable coincidence—although not without some cause—that both mechanical progress and organized education originated in the 19th century. The industrial revolution was not only responsible for a new and shallow attitude to life, an unlimited optimism and belief in progress, it also created a new profession, the teacher. Although the training of the young was still considered a vocation, the ever growing demand for teachers made it impossible to select only those who were genuinely gifted. The "professional" teacher is a representative and significant creation of the new Middle-class.

This new commercial class which wanted to be as "educated" as the Aristocracy did not care much for vocation in a teacher, but rather for a sound professional knowledge, a matter-of-fact method, and a "progressive" attitude. The writings of Locke and Rousseau provided the Middle-class with the essential elements of a general and compulsory education. Locke's conception of the mind as a development led—in theory at least—to a method of teaching conditioned as to nature, material and sequence, by mental development ; while Rousseau's training of the sensibility completed this ideal educational system. Only those things that were "useful" should be taught. What, however, constitutes "usefulness" was not clear to anybody, least of all to the teacher. It is in this test that 19th century education failed.

Throughout this period of transition the teacher or professor suffered from social disability, a disability which still in our own time characterises this profession. The reasons for this disability are social as well as psychological. As the teacher did not actively participate in industrial or economic progress, and as he was not concerned with the evolution of ideas and standards, but with the teaching of traditional knowledge, he was not allowed to taste from the forbidden fruit of progress. Although he earned his living in the same way as any other professional man, the teaching of the young was still considered a "vocation," and he was supposed to observe those standards of conduct which would make his pupils ideal human beings. There was a noticeable discrepancy between the standards of conduct at

home or in society and at school. In fact, the community expected the teacher to observe moral standards it refused itself to observe.

A teacher had therefore to adjust himself to two opposite and contradictory standards of conduct at the same time : those which were expected from him as a teacher and those which he had to observe as a member of the social group. No wonder, that most of the teachers failed in their endeavours to adjust themselves. Teachers were expected to be the intellectual "leaders" of the community, but owing to their peculiar economic position within the group and to their constant relationship with children only, they hardly ever even succeeded in being on equal terms with other members of the same community. On the other hand, however, this "intimacy" with their pupils did not go very far. The teacher was always "floating" between his equals and his pupils : there was no social stratum which would have accepted him without contempt and ridicule. We hardly know of any other profession in which this dilemma is as obvious as in that of the teacher. Charles Lamb, in his Essay, *The Old and New Schoolmaster*, mentions this social disability, without, however, realizing the peculiar kind of this dilemma :

"Why are we never quite at our ease in the presence of a schoolmaster ? Because we are conscious that he is not quite at his ease in ours. He is awkward and out of place, in the society of his equals. He comes like Gulliver from among his little people, and he cannot fit the stature of his understanding to yours. He cannot meet you on the square... He is forlorn among his co-evals ; his juniors cannot be his friends."1

This is by no means an exceptional view on the matter ; almost a hundred years afterwards we find a similar opinion expressed in a book written by a schoolmaster himself ; we may, therefore, assume that this "disability" existed throughout the century and could easily be found in our own post-war period :

"Then, too, in his dealings with men of equal age, he must be prepared to be considered rather a tiresome person, living somewhat apart from the main current of affairs... And he must be prepared also to be treated as a kind of clergyman, as a man who is bound by his profession to adopt a conventional view and to luxuriate in genial priggishness."2

Another reason for this disability was the deficient education of the teachers themselves. At a time when the demand for teachers was greater than the supply, cheap and inefficient labour was encouraged. Even in Sunday-schools, which were founded in 1780, teachers were not all volun-

1. *The Essays of Elia*, 1820.

2. A. C. Benson : *The Schcolmaster*. A Commentary upon the aims and methods of an assistant-master in a Public School. 1903.

teers ; they were, in some instances, paid according to the number of their pupils, and not to the quality of their work ; the teacher was paid as many pence for his day's work as there were pupils attending his classes. In fact, it was not quite clear to anybody, where to take the teachers from who would be responsible for a general and compulsory education in England. Both Adam Smith and Thomas Paine saw no difficulty in finding teachers : "There are always persons of both sexes to be found in every village, *especially when growing into years*, capable of such an undertaking." [1]

As rudimentary instruction was first given in response to a commercial and utilitarian demand, the teachers were selected from amongst private adventurers, mostly women, who carried on their schools unlicensed. We find descriptions of this kind of country schools—to which everybody went, except the children from the highest classes—in Fielding's novels and in Smollett's *Peregrine Pickle* (1751). The real problem of 19th-century England was not how to educate her children, but how to educate her teachers. In the pamphlet which we quoted previously we find the following interesting remark :

"In my Lord John's (Russel) speech on this part of the question, there is a very startling statement made on the authority of Sir John Pakington—'that 700 teachers did not sign their own names, but merely affixed their marks'—thereby intimating their inability to write their names. "2

By a strange coincidence the greatest English writer of this century in a novel published in the same year as this pamphlet, denounced the education of schoolmasters as deficient, backward, and altogether too mechanical :

"So Mr. M'Choakmuchild began in his best manner. He and some hundred and forty other schoolmasters had been lately turned at the same time, in the same factory, on the same principles, like so many pianoforte legs." 3

The teacher who should be the most important factor in the evolution of cultural values within a community, did not participate in this evolution ; amongst all the "liberal" professions he was the least open-minded and the most "uneducated." He was not aware of the transition. His half-culture his social illiteracy, made him blind, supercilious, conceited, and essentially unaware. In other words, if his brain was mechanically trained, his sensibility remained unresponsive to the most important problems of his time.

When Rousseau, in the first book of *Emile*, opens the debate on the teacher, he exclaims : "A teacher, O what a sublime soul. . ." He and all the Romantic poets after him expected the teacher to be a prophet, a leader, and an idol in every respect. They were all willing to follow the teacher,

1. Thomas Paine : *The Rights of Man.* 1721/2.
2. *The Education of the Masses*, op. cit. 1856.
3. Dickens : *Hard Times*, chap. II. 1856.

provided his soul was "sublime" and he did not teach for "mercenary" purposes. But how could his soul be "sublime," if he was socially disabled and his profession treated with contempt ! His soul, in fact, was prematurely corrupted ; floating between his equals and his juniors he was either bitter or indifferent about everything. In his manners he was grotesque, monstrous, and eccentric. His attitude towards his pupils was either that of benevolent indifference or of unlimited hatred. Addison, in *The Spectator*, gives a fine description of these two types of teachers so common in the 19th century, and even today :

"I am the more inclined to this opinion, having myself experienced the usage of two rural masters, each of them very unfit for the trust they took upon them to discharge. The first imposed much more upon me than my parts, tho' none of the weakest, could endure, and used me barbarously for not performing impossibilities. The later was quite of another temper ; and a boy who would run upon his errands, wash his coffee-pot, or ring the bell, might have as little conversation with any of the classics as he thought fit. . ."[1]

It seems that the psychology of teachers is a subject worthy of the attention of every educationalist. The literature of the 19th and 20th century provides us with sufficient material for such a study. Towards the end of the 18th century Wordsworth went to Cambridge. His gift for shrewd observation made him note "in playful zest of fancy," "the manners and the ways of those who in the livery were array'd of good and evil fame"; he realized the unfitness of most of his teachers to teach—

"...but chiefly, in the ring
Of the grave Elders, Men unscour'd, grotesque
In character ; trick'd out like aged trees
Which, through the lapse of their infirmity,
Give ready place to any random seed
That chuses to be rear'd upon their trunks." 2

The "lapse of their infirmity" was not so much their old age, but the peculiar deformation of their sensibility due to their "floating" status between two generations. This deformation, as long as it remained static, inspired only disgust or contempt ; but towards the middle of the 19th century, we find a new type of teachers, rationalists of the worst type, and frequently sadists of a dangerous nature. Dickens tells us something about them too ;

"With a rule and a pair of scales, and the multiplication table always in his pocket, Sir, ready to weigh and measure any parcel of human nature, and tell you exactly what it comes to. It is a mere question of figures, a case of simple arithmetic... He seemed a galvanising appartus, too, charged with a grim mechanical substitute for the tender young imaginations that were to be stormed away." 3

1. *The Spectator*, No. 313. Febr. 28. 1712.
2. Wordsworth : *The Prelude*, Bk. III.
3. Dickens : *ibid.*

Dickens gives us the best description of a socially disabled teacher in his novel *Our Mutual Friend*. Here the deformation of the teachers's sensibility becomes highly ludicrous and almost fantastic. Bradley Headstone is "decent" in everything concerning his dress and his manners. Dickens insists so much on his "decency" that it becomes clear before long that Bradley Headstone realised very well the necessity of being more "decent" in everything than the average man in the community, to be an example, a leader, almost a prophet. Yet, he too failed, because he did not see the discrepancy between his standards of conduct and those of his environment. For, despite his decent dresses he looked like "some mechanics in their holiday clothes." In short, he *pretended* to be "decent," but, at bottom, was no more "decent" than his equals in other professions. Furthermore, he arranged his "wholesale warehouse" in such a manner that it may always be ready "to meet the demands of retail dealers" ; there was a "suspicious manner" about him : he was for ever "lying in wait" ; and on his face there was always some "kind of settled trouble" : "it was the face belonging to a naturally slow or unattentive intellect that had toiled hard to get what it had won, and that had to hold it now that it was gotten. He always seemed to be uneasy lest anything should be missing from his mental warehouse, and taking stock to assure himself."[1] Only a teacher can behave in such a way, a socially and economically "disabled" person.

Towards the end of the century another great writer raised his voice against those teachers whose sensibility was distorted and who were unaware of what was going on around them ; here it is no longer ridicule and contempt ; it is an accusation of a very definite kind :

> "Could it be expected to enter the head of such a man as this that in reality he was making his money by corrupting youth ; that it was his paid profession to make the worse appear the better reason in the eyes of those who were too young and inexperienced to be able to find him out. . . that he was a passionate half-turkey-cock, half-gander of a man whose sallow, bilious face and hobble-gobble voice could scare the timid, but who would take to his heels readily enough if he were met firmly. . ."[2]

There is no doubt that both the lack of proper education and the social disability of the teachers were reflected in the school and university life of that time. No relevent education was given and the young were trained to be socially as "disabled," as their teachers were. A few remarks are, however, necessary to elucidate this point.

Teachers, even if they were trained and "educated" did not know how to impart their knowledge to their pupils. Not being sufficiently interested

1. Dickens : *Our Mutual Friend*, Book II, chap. I. 1864/5.
2. Samuel Butler : *The Way of All Flesh*. 1884.

in the common concerns of the social group, their instruction became necessarily narrow and unrelated to reality. Although the abyss between education and learning was created only in the 19th century, we find the first signs of this discrepancy long before. Pope, in his *Dunciad*, exclaims:

> "Since man from beasts by words is known,
> Words are man's province, words we teach alone.
> When reason doubtful, like the Samian letter,
> Points him two ways ; the narrower is the better.
> Placed at the door of learning, youth to guide,
> We never suffer it to stand too wide . . ." 1

There is no reason to believe that instruction improved in the following hundred years. Throughout that time it was essentially mechanical and passive. No individual attention was given to the pupil in both schools and universities alike. Cardinal Newman, in 1852, called it "the wonder of the age" : "What the steam engine does with matter, the printing press is to do with mind ; it is to act mechanically, and the population is to be passively, almost unconsciously enlighted. . ."2 How true this remark was, is shown by the fact that during the last decades of the 18th century many professors at Cambridge never lectured or imparted knowledge of any kind to their students ; on the other hand, however, undergraduates who broke rules were subject to the schoolboy punishment of "learning lines" by heart. And in Oxford, in 1850, out of 1500 or 1600 students, the average attendance at the modern history course was 8, at the chemistry course $5\frac{1}{2}$, at Botany 6, and so on. A similar situation is to be found in public schools ; the public school in Shrewsbury had in 1798 only 20 boys. The reasons for this decline in public schools are manifold. One is to be found in the fact that periodically riots broke out in these schools, rebellions and insubordinations, which made the schools an unfit place for children to live in. Parents preferred to keep private tutors in their own house and under their own supervision. As for the "morality" in these schools, it almost seems as though both teachers and pupils were periodically running amok.

In such schools and universities the great minds of the time were educated. Many of them revolted against that existing spirit ; but as it was but a small minority, their voices passed unheard. Disappointed as they were with their own education they dreamed of some ideal commonwealth—

> "To see a Sanctuary for our country's youth,
> With such a spirit in it as might be

1. Alexander Pope : *The Dunciad*. Bk. IV, 142sq. 1729, (final edition : 1743.)
2. Cardinal Newman : *On the Scope and Nature of University Education*, 1852.

Protection for itself, a virgin grove,
Primaeval in its purity and depth. . . . "1

But in vain they look for such "solemnity"; their ears have to listen to "chattering popinjays" and "the inner heart is trivial." In the same year when Wordsworth published his *Prelude*, Byron was a pupil at Harrow; his protest is as vehement as that of Wordsworth:

"Of narrow brain, *yet of a narrower soul*,
Pomposus holds you in his harsh control;
Pomposus, *by no social virtue sway'd*,
With florid jargon, and with vain parade;
With noisy nonsense, and new-fangled rules,
Such as were ne'er before enforced in schools.
Mistaking pedantry for learning's laws,
He governs, sanction'd but by self-applause. . ."2

Most of the teachers which we find in 19th-century literature are "by no social virtue sway'd"; the pupil, whenever he is aware of this social disability, ridicules it, despises it, but very rarely realizes the psychological and sociological background for this deformation. The teacher Field in Charles Lamb's *Essays* is another grotesque character of the same kind; Lamb seems to be slightly amused when he mentions Field, the teacher; for although his brain was narrow, "he was a good easy man." He came to the school whenever he liked, and very frequently he did not like coming. However, "it made no difference to us," for he had his own private room, to which he retired "the short time he stayed." It is the symbolical "private room" of all teachers to which they all retire, whenever they want to be "out of the sound of the noises" of common humanity. Floating between two generations and not being able to stick to either of them, they escape to this "private room" where—as Robinson Crusoe on his Island—they build up some imaginary commonwealth with teachers as prophets and leaders of the people. "Our mirth and uproar went on . . . as would have made the souls of Rousseau and John Locke chuckle to have seen us."3 Coleridge, who speaks very well of his teacher Boyer, cannot, however, pass over in silence the problems of education in public schools. "Improved pedagogy," says he, teaches the pupils, "to dispute and decide; to suspect all, but their own and their lecturer's wisdom, and to hold nothing sacred from their contempt but their own contemptible arrogance. . ."4

1. Wordsworth: *The Prelude*, book III.
2. Byron: *On a change of Masters at a Great Public School*, July 1805. (Italics are mine.)
3. Charles Lamb: *Ibid. Christ's Hospital five and thirty years ago.*
4. Coleridge: *Biographia Literaria*, chap. I. 1817.

School and University life, no doubt, reflect the teacher's psychology and his position to society. Despised and frequently maltreated by the society of the young and the society of his equals, supposed to follow standards of conduct which were long ago rejected by the social group, forced to deform and distort his own sensibility in the process of teaching, he belongs to the least "liberal" of all professions, a profession which as that of the poet, the priest, or the philosopher, is by common consent considered to be a vocation ; and, lastly, economically speaking, he is and always has been a non-entity. Charles Lamb in his essay, *The Old and New Schoolmaster*, very well realized the psychological difficulty of the teacher, the necessity in which he finds himself to inhibit his best instincts and to exhibit his sadistic impulses. A teacher speaks there in the following illuminating manner : "But persons in my situation are more to be pitied than can well be imagined. We are surrounded by young and, consequently, ardently affectionate hearts, but *we* can never hope to share an atom of their affections. *The relation of master and scholar forbids this.*" [1] The relationship between teacher and pupil in the 19th century was certainly not in any way similar to that of Plato and his pupils. It seems hardly necessary to quote the long passage from *Christ's Hospital* where Lamb gives us a vivid description of mediaeval tortures in an English public school. A boy in fetters, the dungeons, "where a boy could just lie at his length upon straw and a blanket," the beadle and the periodical chastisement, the instances of lunacy and suicide, the "*auto da fé*" and the "*Ultima Supplicia*" in public.

The question which a responsible educationalist has to ask himself is, what has become of these youths, who were educated in such a pagan and "compulsory" way ? What can possibly be the fate of those children who were brought up by socially disabled teachers in a mechanical and essentially passive way ? However little the influence of the teacher might have been, his distorted and deformed sensibility reflected itself in the children's way of behaviour, of reacting to things and persons. If the teacher's "brain and soul" were far from being "sublime," why should we expect their students' brain and soul to be more open-minded ? Throughout the 19th century pupils were expected to obey and to do things as they were told, without sufficient reasons being given. As the teacher was standing outside transition, how could he possibly give reasons which he himself did not understand ? It was the proto-type of a school for leadership, for that kind of leaders and followers which the West needed in 1914 and in the post-war period. Dr. Marie Montessori, in a recent pamphlet, clearly defines this tendency of the public school in the 19th century :

1. Italics are mine.

"The obedience which is expected of a child both in the home and in the school—an obedience admitting neither of reason nor of justice—prepares the man to be docile to blind forces. The punishment, so common in schools, which consists in subjecting the culprit to public reprimand and is almost tantamount to the torture of the pillory, fills the soul with a crazy, unreasoning fear of public opinion, even an opinion manifestly unjust and false. In the midst of these adaptations and many others which set up a permanent inferiority complex is born the spirit of devotion—not to say of idolatry—to the condottieri, the leaders."[1]

A few generations of teachers educated by compulsion were quite sufficient to make the "leader" the most outstanding phenomenon of contemporary civilization. To-day the teacher is as up-rooted as ever before. If he is still unaware of the transition, he works solely for economic reward and is not concerned with education any more than with anything else. The souls of Rousseau, Locke and Pestalozzi are still going on "chuckling" and the teacher feels at home only in his "private room" into which neither the society of the young nor the society of the old are ever admitted. Membership to some extremist political party might relieve him temporarily from his social disability, but, whatever his economic or social circumstances might be, in the face of the growing social illiteracy of the masses, he feels impotent and unable to help. If, however, he is aware, he might become a "social worker" in the best sense of the term.[2] His sensibility will re-adjust itself to the standards and values of a society in transition. Instead of being a bulwark against progress, he will help his students to be intelligently aware of this transition, he will live with them in the slums or in the open country, he will participate in the common concerns of the social group, the society of his equals. He will have his well deserved place amongst the professions. And the teacher's "private room" will be abolished once for all.

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1. Quoted in Aldous Huxley's *Means and Ends*, 1938, p. 181.
2. See : D. H. Lawrence : *The Rainbow*, chap : "The Man's World."
   Ruth Adams : *I'm not complaining*, 1938.

AN ADDRESS*

By Rabindranath Tagore

I FEEL the loss very keenly that I am no longer able to be in your midst and share your life and work as I used to do in the early days of this asrama. Physical infirmity has deprived me of that joy of intimacy, that personal contact which used to mean so much both to students and to myself.

I started this Institution with almost no means. In fact, I was heavily burdened with debt. A few pupils and some co-workers shared with me what little I could call mine. Poor we were and lived very humbly; but we were all so near to one another's heart and so close was our personal contact, that I am sure nobody ever felt that he was away from home.

Those early days had a great lesson for me. It was then that I had my true education. As you perhaps know, I had had no academic training. It is true that I was put in a Bengali school as a matter of course; but even there I felt that I was not exactly a model student. Indifferent to most other subjects, I garnered only what pleasure was to be found in our ancient literature. Before my thirteenth year I had hardly any knowledge of English. It was possible in those days to gather knowledge and information through the mother-tongue. From a devouring love of the mother-tongue to the love of my mother-land—it was an easy transition.

When I first began this experimentin education, nobody could have been more conscious of his inadequacy as a teacher than myself. I had had practically no experience of formal teaching. Nevertheless, curiously enough, I succeeded beyond expectation in this line—at least so I believed. For I was guided by a genuine sympathy for all young things. I realised myself in them, felt absolutely one with them and thus won their love. When they clung to me, they took an amount of liberty which, I think, is not allowed anywhere else. They took me to be of their own age, dragged me into their room to improvise new parlour games or stories for them. My mind was then fresh and vigorous and I could invent games and stories without any difficulty.

Thus the institution grew in an atmosphere of love and understanding and its growth was synchronous with mine. My colleagues must have felt along with me the living spirit of this place. The one important factor that

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* What follows is a more or less verbatim report, taken down by Khitish Roy, of Rabindranath Tagore's extempore address to the newly admitted students at Santiniketan on 4th August, 1938.—*Ed.*

contributed to create the proper atmosphere of an asrama was a complete harmony of the heart and mind. No snobbery vitiated the relation between the pupils and their teachers, there was no division, no spirit of coterie. The students were few in number, not many came from outside Bengal ; but wheresoever their home, they were easily assimilated here, and learnt to identify themselves with the ideals and aspirations of the asrama. They took up the language and culture of the place easily and naturally. I want you new-comers to realise one thing which many of our own people do not—and that is the uniqueness of this institution. From foreign lands, we have had visitors—eminent scholars, great personalities—who have been struck with something they never found in other places. This is not realised by many of our own people who are beginning to develop a too materialistic bias in their outlook ; they try to measure greatness quantitatively. They appreciate big dimensions and costly outfit.

When I began my work, we had our classes under the shade of big trees. There were perhaps not more than five or six pupils. I was the only teacher. I still wonder how I carried on my task. It must have been purely through my love and tender concern for them. My own depth of being came spontaneously to their aid and assistance, to the forming of their minds. Their claim on my love, my time and my health never suffered a rebuff at my hands. Remember, no offer is of any value without a quest or claim made for it, though claims should be made with *śraddhā*, with faith and respect. During those days my sphere of interest was limited within the bounds of Santiniketan, and it was possible for me to devote every day of my life to those that were near me. The students reciprocated by showering claims and questions. Their number grew steadily. I had to ask for help. New-comers came as teachers and were speedily initiated into the spirit of this asrama. They were as easily absorbed in the ideals of this place as the students. My task was rendered easy and delightful, and, as you all know, delight is an important factor in such an endeavour as this.

We must not, however, forget the part that the environment played in our life. The surrounding Nature was a great teacher to us. She moulded our daily life in the spirit of beauty and delight, harmony and colour, and caused us to meditate upon our inner being. It was Nature that inspired me to write songs, dramas and poems dedicated to her. We had our dances and seasonal festivals and the whole place actually rang with the students' happy voices and music. Surely nature helped them and us in forming our outlook and creating an atmosphere.

I remember being told by people, whose judgment one may rely upon, that our students had a stamp of idealism owing to this kind of training.

Even the casual outsiders could see and feel it. The students were always in readiness to help others, always cheerful and equipped with a real human interest, in which as a rule our people are lacking.

I would like you to imbibe this human interest, the lack of which has made our spirit of nationalism greatly unreal. Our nationalism is like a special dress which we don or doff according as there be or be not ceremonial or sensational occasions. We often clamour for things of no account whatsoever. Three hundred and sixtyfour days we are unmindful of the true interests of our own country, and one day in a year we wake up to find that a great servant of the nation had died that day and we array ourselves and make speeches and hoist flags and then relapse into our own selfish pursuits.

The young patriots of our country I would like to ask, what real interest they have taken in the rural uplift work. How few of them realise that these villages build the foundation of our country! From my own experience I understood that unless the poor villagers were provided with decent means of existence, unless they were taught self-respect, unless their minds were strengthened, there was no chance to realise true independence. I never could appreciate the unreality and insipid demonstrativeness of platform patriotism. I have provided for you an agency for village improvement work which should go hand in hand with cultural development. I would wish you to come close to the simple life of the primitive people and poor peasants in the surrounding villages, to know their needs and thus gain the experience of truly helping that part of your nation whose needs should be palpable to you, if only you would care to look round and see.

Many of you come from outside Bengal, most of you I do not know intimately, but, to all of you my one appeal is, that you should achieve the unity of soul. Your stay here will be fruitful and significant if you can make friends with strangers and offer your hearts to one another. To other institutions of the stereotyped kind students come and go and hardly ever leave their impress behind. Once they pass their examination, they are done with the institution to which they at no time actually belonged. That has not been our ideal. We want to make you permanently and specially our very own. You come here with the mission of realising the fundamental unity of humanity through co-operation and love. To help you to fulfil this mission I have made room for you all.

I call Santiniketan an asrama because our ancient forest-schools had before them the very same ideal of reciprocity and love. When disciples came to the *guru*, they were taken in as members of his family and shared his life, material as much as the spiritual. The teacher regarded it as part of his religious duty to sustain and nourish the mind as well as the body of

his pupils. Education had not then become a mere mechanical contrivance to spread literacy or a commercial investment in the name of enlightenment. I wanted to do away with the machine, to stimulate human interest and not to insist upon the clock-work precision of efficiency. With that idea in view I had made provision not only for academic courses of teaching, but also for other elements of culture : music and art and dancing, seasonal festivities and opportunities of helping the neighbouring villages. All of them co-ordinate to become something which cannot be analysed, which is not describable save in terms of so vague and yet so tangible a thing as the atmosphere.

I was led by a new idea when I thought of evolving a true education through the collaboration of the teachers and the students, both of whom would own equal responsibility to the asrama. To follow this ideal or not depends entirely upon you. All that I can do is to make an appeal to you to make the truth of understanding and love grow all around the asrama. When you leave the institution, leave something of your own, some contribution of yours to the atmosphere of the place.

I wish I could make you realise the beauty of the ideal to whose call I so readily responded. Unless you know the meaning of the great sacrifice I made, you will find it difficult to understand the significance of the place. I had my special gift of music and poetry, my beautiful seclusion in the house-boat on the Padma where I wrote things which have won some recognition. What need had I to leave everything behind to take up this task against odds which daily sapped my life and energy ? You may even ask was not the burden of the School sufficient that I added on to it that of the Visva-Bharati ?

To have an answer to this query you will have to refer to my experiences in Europe when I visited that country to receive the Nobel prize. How they opened their hearts to a complete stranger ! When I was in Sweden, they literally swept me over with an ovation of unimaginable enthusiasm. They gave me a welcome fit only for victorious generals and beloved kings. When I asked them what led to such a spontaneous outburst of hospitality, they told me that that was because they had realised that my love and mind were not limited to a particular race and time, that I belonged to all. However, that is in itself nothing if not for the great lesson it had for me. When I received human kindness from such strangers I said to myself that I would throw open my doors to all, let my asrama become the guest-house of India, a centre of culture and of *maitri*. I cannot boast that I have completed my task, I can only say that I have tried my best.

There are so many factors that lie in the way of our success. We

have to work with various personalities , sometimes so contrary and even contradictory as to make unity of heart and soul in a common cause difficult. Then, there is that subtle danger of cynicism which may belittle any great ideal, even the purest ideal of humanity. Europe, during and after the War, went through a whole gamut of feelings which makes it impossible for her to attend to the positive aspect of things ; disillusionment eats into her society and signs are evident of decay and destruction. But we who have done nothing, what right have we to take shelter behind the sham of cynicism ? We must build upon faith and not upon the quicksand of scepticism and the spirit of negation. We must have that complete unquestioning faith which made nations great. The spirit of mockery and of satanic destruction must inevitably lead the world today to a moral massacre. Not to believe in things, to be cynical and to wag one's head to a constant 'no' may seem up-to-date and fashionable. But it cannot go on indefinitely. The time will come when the Western civilization will stand on the brink of a very great disaster, lose its balance and rush headlong to its doom. Shall we too yield to the temptation and imitate the modern spirit of negation and hold in contempt everything that is great and good ? After disaster, the virile might veer to a better reaction. But we who are weak will not survive the cataclysm that we will invite on ourselves.

I am not in perfect health and I may never come to know you as intimately as once I could. But do believe that I have great love for you all who have come to share our hospitality among us.

THE ART OF JAPAN

Benodebehari Mukherjee*

WHENEVER we come across some unfamiliar art tradition, we are attracted by its strangeness, by the curiosity it rouses in us. "Curio," this very word shows our mental attitude towards art traditions not our own. So long as we have not overcome the apparent strangeness of some particular art tradition, the appeal of that art remains more or less intellectual. At times the newness or strangeness is too attractive, at other times too repulsive. In many cases we have seen that even persons of keen intellect and refinement could not steer clear between these two extreme reactions. They could never understand or appreciate the art of a country other than their own. There was a time when Western critics thought Indian art to be grotesque for no better reason than that the Indian deities were represented as having more than two arms. But the Greek models (of Satyrs, for example) with human body and animal feet never struck them as odd. When Japanese art was first introduced to Europeans, they were attracted by the novel compositions of HIROSIGE and HAKUSI. KORIN'S decorative treatment of water and rock was greatly admired. But all this admiration and enthusiasm for the Far-Eastern art were not the outcome of real love or true understanding. The attraction was due to its novel form and technique.

While venturing to give my impressions of Japanese painting, I am afraid of being misled by a similar bias. Let me, however, hope, that in spite of some personal bias, of which no man can completely rid himself, I could see something of Japanese painting in its true light, though it is quite probable that I too have missed much.

For my purpose, I shall divide the whole history of Japanese art in three broad divisions. First, the art of Japan before the Chinese or so-called Buddhistic influence came to be felt. The art of this period is more or less of archaeological interest. The Haniwa clay figure, belonging to this period, though it cannot be taken as an example of developed art, yet reveals considerable technical knowledge and mastery of the art of pottery. For me this Haniwa clay figure has, however, an added interest and that is its curious resemblance to some Bengali and South Indian dolls.

The real art history of Japan began after it came into contact with China and through her with the religion of the Buddha. So far, however,

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as the religious art is concerned we should know that such famous examples as the paintings of the Nara Temple or the early Lohan paintings, are not characteristically Japanese. The true genius of the Japanese masters flowered forth when their art came to be diverted from religious tradition, and when they looked for objects nearer at hand for inspiration. The vivid dramatic quality of the new art they evolved becomes apparent when we look at those long scrolls depicting battle scenes, a besieged palace, a Samurai with his wounded horse, etc. It is in such scroll paintings that we discover the characteristic genius of the Japanese artists. Side by side with the panoramic scrolls there are paintings of birds, beasts and flowers. The feeling one gets from all these paintings is difficult to express, but it is very akin to that genuine sensation which is produced only by masterpieces of pictorial art.

The one fact that impresses the mind with the force of conviction is, that with all its wonderful and highly sophisticated execution, Japanese art of this epoch expresses a primitive longing for life in Nature and a childish wonder at creation. Whether it be the painting of an animal, a landscape or those long scrolls depicting battle scenes, they give the one and the same impression of primitive strength and intense dramatic force. I should say that "*the dramatic*" is one of the most characteristic elements of Japanese painting and of the genius of Japan in general. The strong dramatic sense combined with unsophisticated love of Nature has made Japanese painting unique.

Now if we compare Japanese painting with that of China we may trace the characteristic we are talking of in a more definite manner. The reaction of Chinese painting on that of Japan is so important that once we are able to make clear this point, the true genius of Japanese art will stand revealed. Since the days of the introduction of Buddhism, Japanese art has been nourished under Chinese influence. For quite a long time all the great masters of Japan drew inspiration from Chinese sources. If then we can see Japanese art freed from the element of Chinese influence we may then get an idea of the native genius of Japan. Immediately after its contact with Chinese art, Japanese painting became heavy and solid in its treatment. At the same time one should also admit that Japanese art at this stage gives an idea of expansion, of a broader outlook. As the Chinese element became less obvious the painting of Japan became more free and less ponderous ; it lost much of its solidity as well as something of that feeling of expansion.

When we contemplate a Chinese landscape or an Indian model, they no doubt give us aesthetic joy of a high order ; but, with the aesthetic enjoyment there is invariably mixed up something intellectual. This

intellectual bias can be more easily felt in the art of the decadent period of China and India. It was only when the intellect could overcome itself that India or China produced their great masterpieces. That is why we see that many a time the art of India or of China degenerated into abstract symbolism. A typical Japanese picture, on the other hand, surprises us even like a sudden lightning flash. This quality of taking us unawares and thrilling us with unexpected joy has been developed by Japanese artists in their unrivalled studies of flowers, perfect in form and colour. There is nothing intellectual about these studies. For the Indian or the Chinese artist, the method of approach is different, because it is intellect which leads them to the region of feeling. If and where the creative genius is not of a high order, the result of the artistic effort is something drab and nondescript, and its appeal neither intellectual nor emotional. In Japanese Art feeling and emotion lead the way to intellect. Where the feeling is not strong Japanese painting becomes a mere reflection or a photographic reproduction of an existing phenomenon.

This very brief contrast of the two different traditions suggests one fact, namely that the Japanese tends more often than not towards realism. Artistic restraint and discipline which Japan learnt from China saved the Japanese tradition from the almost certain danger of imitative reality. But, on the other hand, it would also be true to say that whenever the Japanese genius succeeded in emancipating itself from this restraint, the result achieved was marvellous. Along with this we should do well to remember that it is craftmanship and not sophisticated art which is the natural and most powerful gift of this nation.

So far I have given a cursory impression of Japanese painting in general. Now I shall try to give my impression of some great masters of Japan, those immortal geniuses who have left behind a fund of perennial joy. Of the Japanese painters I think KORIN is the most popular, particularly in Europe and America. Without doubt, KORIN is a master in his own line but we cannot call him a great genius. He had a novel way of seeing, and he had in his paintings that quality of taking one unawares already referred to. He may be called the classic master of an art, that was pretty without being cheap. His composition is faultless, though deliberate to a very great extent. If, on the other hand, we look at the work of SOTARSU, the great master of KORIN, and one of the greatest and true masters of Japan, the insipidity of KORIN'S art becomes obvious. Yet I cannot but admit that KORIN, more than SOTARSU, has expressed the typical side of the genius of Japan. In this connection I would like to say one more thing : Now-a-days the canons of Western art speak volubly about architectural construction of a work of art and its abstract appeal. Many of us

oriental artists think it to be a new discovery in the field of aesthetics. But if we scrutinise some of the screen paintings of SOTARSU or a few of the best examples from KANO school we may at once discover how well-knit they are in construction and how very abstract their appeal is. From the Western viewpoint there are few who can come near SOTARSU with regard to the above two attributes. Along with SOTARSU'S, I would like to mention another name, that of KOETSU. Historically they were contemporaries. Another great master is SETSU. SETSU and KORIN are poles asunder. KORIN, though not a very great artist, has nevertheless expressed very intimately all the characteristic traits of the Japanese mind. SETSU, a far greater painter than KORIN, has very little of the true Japanese element in him. His soul is Chinese.

The tradition of Japanese painting, with its long and almost unbroken Chinese connection, then came under a new influence, that of the art and civilization of the West. For a considerable time the European influence was not much in evidence. Here and there some attempts were made of introducing perspective, and that remained for a long time the only visible reaction of the Western upon Japanese Art. But suddenly Japanese Art emerged before us in a new appearance, with a novel perspective, new subjects and with a wonderfully broad artistic outlook. The UKEOY school of Japan still remains a thing of wonder to us. There is much difference of opinion about the position of UKEOY art and of the artists of that school. From the strictly classical standpoint it might appear that among the UKEOY masters, there was some want of aesthetic discipline and refinement. But what these artists lacked in refinement, they more than made up for by the vigour of their treatment and the wonderful curiosity about life by which they were moved. They followed the best traditions of the early masters, and looked upon the fast-changing panorama of daily life with the same spirit of wonder and childish curiosity. Studies of flowers might have been replaced by studies of the water-mill, but in both is revealed the same lack of sophistication, the same adherence to realism. Thus the UKEOY masters achieved something which was very near the temperament and native genius of the people of Japan. The greatest contribution of the artists of this school is that through their genius the pictorial art of Japan had come to stand upon a broader foundation, if not a deeper one. It is in this sense that they may be regarded the forerunners of the modern art of Japan. The school, being the connecting link between the classical and modern periods of Japanese art history, it will not be wrong to call the UKEOY artists the classical masters of modern Japanese art.

After the decay of the UKEOY school, Japanese art has moved in various directions. At present there are different groups of artists, each of whom

has an ideal of its own. As far as I could discern, it seems that there are only two ideals, the one of realism and the other of reality. Today realism is in the forefront of Japanese art. There is, however, still a set of adherents who follow in the lines of what is traditional and classical. But a majority of the younger generation, despite their conventional arrangement and traditional technique, are in reality nearer the realism of the Western art than ever before. Why should it be so ? One of the explanations should necessarily be the fact of constant contact with the West. But the deeper cause lies, of course, in the Japanese temperament which naturally tends towards realism. Once Chinese aesthetics saved Japanese artists from realism ; today they are inevitably being brought back to it with the help of Western art. That my conclusion is not far wrong is proved by the fact that there are some artists—and among them the recognised masters of modern Japan—who, after working in Western method for a considerable time, have come back to the old method.

When we look at the work of these masters, one interesting query naturally occurs : to what extent has Western realism damaged Japanese tradition ? One of the most fundamental characteristics of Japanese painting, and indeed of all schools of Oriental painting in general, is the relation of space and form, and the abstract value of space. But when we look at the works of those masters who have returned to their own tradition after a study of the Western technique, we find that in most cases the result is not very happy, that is to say, that with all their good intentions they have only succeeded in emulating realism—the one banal weakness of the Western art tradition.

There is also another aspect of the influence of the modern Western art on the art of Japan. The earliest paintings in oil and water colour (of western style) are suffused with the atmosphere of Japan, with the so-called local colour. But it is unfortunate that the art of the present generation shows a lamentable lack of this factor except in a few stray exceptions. Their paintings always echo some other picture or some other style. As far as execution and craftmanship go, they may be faultless, but the frigid quality of their genius is painful in the extreme. From what exhibitions I attended in Japan, I could gather that PICASSO and MATISSE exert the strongest influence on the Japanese oil painters. Apart from the followers of these two there are a number of devoted adherents of almost all the different schools of France today. Notable among them are the schools of surrealism, impressionism, etc. There cannot be any question about the thoroughness of these artists. They are following close at the heels of the French School. Not only have they copied the style and mannerism of the French painters, but have also gone so far as to introduce French ideal of beauty in their figure drawing.

There is another fact about modern Japanese Art which has struck me as curious and painful, and which I may call over-emphasis of the notion of *style*. The few critics and teachers of art that I could meet, seemed to be practically obsessed with the idea of *style*. It is difficult to explain what lies behind this mentality among the oil painters of Japan. But I think, without any fear of contradiction one may say, that preoccupation with *style* is working like an insidious poison and striking at the very root of the art of Japan.

It is true that I did not like many traits in Japanese oil-painting ; nevertheless, I should say that one cannot altogether ignore the oil-painters of modern Japan, particularly when one compares them with our Indian oil painters (both the countries had adopted oil painting almost at the same time). The superiority of the Japanese in this field is obvious. In handling foreign medium they are much superior to us.

A STUDY OF ṚGVEDA X, 71.

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ALTHOUGH it has been indisputably held that the study of the Vedas, particularly that of the Ṛgveda, is indispensable for any student of Indian Culture and Civilization, we do not as yet possess a complete annotated translation of the Ṛgvedic hymns, prepared in the light of the latest researches in Indology. This want of an up-to-date translation of the most ancient and, in a certain sense, most important literary monument of India has been, in the main, responsible for our all too partial glimpse into, and therefore our insufficient appreciation of, the philosophical and mystic thought-currents of the age of the Ṛgveda. Even our modern historians of Indian philosophy seem to have failed or forgotten to pay their attention to some of the hymns of speculative character, which these latter certainly deserve. We thus miss to a great extent the inspiration and the message of at least those hymns which, in the words of Sir Radhakrishnan, "embody the mature results of conscious reflection on the meaning of the world and man's place in it."

That these philosophical hymns of the Ṛgveda are the most difficult of understanding cannot be gainsaid. And yet attempts have to be made and continued till, if ever, we fully probe the speculative mind of the Vedic poet.

Ṛgveda X, 71 —the subject-matter of the present study—is one such hymn in which some unnamed Vedic poet speculates on the origin and the mystery of the sacred Speech. Somehow or other, the hymn has so far escaped the serious attention of modern Vedists ; it finds no doubt its place in the available translations of the Ṛgveda, but it has not as yet been subjected to a special study, as it ought to have been, in my opinion.

As the Ṛṣi—the author—of this hymn and also of the next one (X, 72), the Indian tradition accepts the god Bṛhaspati, who finds mention in X, 71, 1 and 72, 2. The *Anukramaṇī* says · "Bṛhaspati praised knowledge or wisdom" with this hymn. Śaunaka, to whom the authorship of the *Bṛhaddevatā* is attributed, states (Bṛhadd. VII, 109—111):

यज्ज्योतिरमृतं ब्रह्म यद्योगात्समुपाश्नुते ।
तज्ज्ञानमभितुष्टाव सूक्तेनाथ बृहस्पतिः ॥१०६॥

जीवनार्थं प्रयोगस्तु मन्त्राणां प्रतिषिध्यते ।
वेदतत्त्वार्थविज्ञानं प्रायेणात्र हि दृश्यते ॥११०॥

आचार्याः केचिदित्याहुरत्र वाग्विदुषां स्तवः ।
यथाभिर्निन्द्यतेऽत्रर्ग्भिः सूक्तेऽन्याभिरनर्थवित् ॥१११॥

"That knowledge which is immortal light and through union with which one attains to Brahma, Bṛhaspati then praised with a hymn (namely, with X, 71)."

"Now the employment of the *mantras* for the sake of a livelihood is forbidden. There appears here (in X, 71) for the most part correct knowledge of the essential meaning of the Veda (as the subject of the hymn)."

"Some teachers say that there is here the praise of those who are wise in speech with some stanzas, but with others in this hymn the man who does not know the meaning (of the Veda) is blamed."

Sāyaṇa in his commentary on the first stanza of the hymn says: "Bṛhaspati addressed his own self with this *sūkta*, smiling as he saw that the children had grasped the meaning of the Veda." The hymn is therefore sometimes called the *jñāna-sūkta*. It will then be seen that (i) the Indian tradition took the god Bṛhaspati as author of the hymn ; and that (ii) already in Śaunaka's time there were different opinions as to the significance of the hymn. Sāyaṇa has also entirely failed to throw light on the meaning of the hymn. In our opinion, however, the hymn is the creation of an anonymous poet, and its contents bear a speculative character. It deals with the problem of the Sacred Speech—her origin and her mystery : a topic which has a fascinating charm for the mind of the Ṛgvedic poet. The hymn, moreover, contains some beautiful ideas, loosely strung together though they are. In the concluding portion of this paper I have tried to re-arrange these ideas so that the sequence of thought might easily be perceptible.

Triṣṭubh is the metre of all the stanzas of the hymn, excepting the 9th stanza which is composed in *Jagatī* metre.

Here follow the text of the hymn, my translation and a few explanatory notes thereon.

Stanza 1:

(a) *bṛ́haspate prathamáṁ vācó ágraṁ*
(b) *yát práirata nāmadhéyaṁ dádhānāḥ /*
(c) *yád eṣāṁ śréṣṭhaṁ yád ariprám ā́sīt*
(d) *preṇā́ tád eṣāṁ níhitaṁ gúhāvíḥ //*

Translation :

"Bṛhaspati ! It was the first and earliest (expression) of Speech when they (the earliest Ṛṣis) came forward, giving names (to objects). The best and the spotless, which they held as treasured in the secret of their inner being, became manifest through affection."

Notes:

The stanza is repeated in Ait. Āraṇ*. I, 3. 3, 1-7.

(a) = also ĀŚS. IV, 11, 6 : Pratīka (*bṛhaspate prathamaṁ vācaḥ*): ŚŚS. IX, 26, 3 (Comm.), RVidh. III, 14, 1, VHDh. VIII, 24.—*vāk*-'the Sacred Speech,' which had lain dormant so long in the hearts of the Ṛṣis, but was now expressed in hymns 'for the first time.'

(b) Subject : the first Ṛṣis, the founders of the Vedic Religion and Philosophy.

(c) *preṇā* 'through love or affection' 'through friendship'; this is further explained in st. 2 cd.—Cf. st. 3 b.

Stanza 2 :

(a) *sáktum iva títaunā punánto*
(b) *yátra dhīrā mánasā vācam ákrata /*
(c) *átrā sákhāyaḥ sakhyā́ni jānate*
(d) *bhadrái ṣām lakṣmír níhitādhi vācí //*

Translation :

"Where the wise ones shaped the Speech with (deep) reflection,—they as if winnowing corn-flour through a sieve,—there the friends recognize the friendships. An auspecious mark of these (friendships) is impressed on their Speech."

Notes :

The stanza is cited and explained in N. IV, 10.

(a) *títau-* n. (three-syllabled) 'sieve'; the Sandhi-less last two vowels in the word requires an explanation. Grassmann suggested that *títau-* stands for **titasu-*(√*taṁs*-'to shake') ; so also do Böht.-Roth (*PW*. s. v.) and Wackernagel (*AG*. I, § 37, 1b, pp. 41 *f*.). The latter adds that the word may be a borrowing from an Iranian dialect ; cf. Av. *ahu*-: Ved. *ásu-* 'life'. Among other etymological suggestions put forth by scholars the following may be mentioned . Bradke derives *títau-* from √*tak-* 'to toss, fall to the ground,' that is from an older form **titaku*, but

* The abbreviations in this paper are those commonly known to Vedic students through Bloomfield's *Vedic Concordance* and Wackernagel's *Altindische Grammatik*.

such a vocalic change is unknown in Vedic, found only in Pkt. Bartholomae (*KZ.* 29, 578) says *a-u* should come from *azu* or *avu*. Fick (*GGA.* 1894, 234) would put *tva-* 'to sieve, to sift' at the base **títavu*. Cf. ṚVPr. II, 13 ; Patañjali, *Mahābhāṣya* I, 1, 1 : Kielhorn's ed. vol. I. p. 4.

(c) *átrā*, metrically lengthened.

Stanza 3 :

(a) *yajñéna vācáḥ padavíyam āyan*
(b) *tā́m ánv avindann ṛ́ṣiṣu právi*ṣṭā́*m* /
(c) *tā́m ābhṛ́tyā ví adadhuḥ purutrā́*
(d) *tā́m saptá rebhā́ abhí sā́ṁ navante* //

Translation :

"With the sacrifice they followed the trail of the Speech. They found her entered in the Ṛṣis. They caught her and distributed her unto many. The seven singers praise unto her in a chorus."

Notes :

(a) =ĀŚS. III, 8, 1.—Similar thoughts are met with in I, 72, 6. The Vedic Ṛṣis often say that they found out through Agni or through sacrifice the "secret names" (*gúhyāni nā́māni*, cf. IV, 1, 16 ; V, 3, 3 ; 5, 10 ; VII, 87, 4 ; VIII, 41, 5 ; IX, 95, 2) or "words" (*padā́* X, 53, 10), i.e. they found out the Speech of the poet, which is also the Speech of the gods (I, 164, 5). Cf. Geldner's note on I, 72, 6 in his *Übersetzung*, I.

(b) Essentially the same idea as in st. 1 d.

(c) Cf. X, 125, 3c, where the Speech herself says : *tā́ṁ mā devā́ ví adadhuḥ purutrā́* 'the gods have distributed me unto many.'

(d) Cf. I, 164, 3c: *saptā́ svásāro abhí sā́ṁ navante* ; here the "seven sisters" are the *saptá vā́ṇīḥ* (the "seven voices" : IX, 103, 3), cf. VIII, 59, 3-4.

Stanza 4 :

(a) *utá tvaḥ pā́śyan ná dadarśa vā́cam*
(b) *utá tvaḥ śṛ́ṇván ná śṛ́ṇoti enām* /
(c) *utó tuasmai tanúaṁ ví sasre*
(d) *jāyéva pátya uśatī́ suvā́sāḥ* //

Translation :

"And (many a) one, who sees, has not percieved (i. e. grasped the mystery of) the Speech ; and (many a) one, who hears, hears Her not. And unto that one has She shown Herself like a fond, beautifully-dressed wife unto her husband."

Notes :

See N. I, 19.

From this stanza K. Chattopadhyaya has tried to prove that "the art of writing was very well known to the author of this hymn, as also to his hearers" ; see *Poona Orientalist*, I, No. 4 (Jan. 1937), pp. 49 ff. This statement goes, however, clearly against the spirit of the whole hymn, there being no reference whatever to the written speech ; the hymn is too philosophic and speculative in its character to allow any such assumption.

(b) *śṛṇoti enām* : Sandhi uncalled for.

(c) Cf. N. I, 8.— *tuasmai tanváṁ* (each three-syllabled) : so *metri causa* ; text : *tvasmai tanvàṁ*.

(d) =I, 124, 7c ; IV, 3, 2b ; X, 91, 13d ; an oft-occurring simile.

Stanza 5:

(a) *utá tvaṁ sakhyé sthirápītam āhur*
(b) *náinaṁ hinvanti ápi vājineṣu* /
(c) *ádhenvā carati māyáyā eṣa*
(d) *vācáṁ śuśruvā́ṅ aphalā́ṁ apuṣpā́m* //

Translation :

"Of (many a) one they say that he has become stiff and stout in the friendship ; him they do not even send on in the contests. He wanders with an illusion, which is (so profitless as to be) no milch-cow ; (for) he has heard (learnt) a speech which bears neither fruits nor flowers."

Notes:

(ab) An allusion to racing, cf. III, 53, 23,—24.

(a) Cf. N. I, 8.—*sthirápīta-* lit. 'one who has attained stiff fatness,' is a Karmadhāraya compd. of the type *vṛttapīna* ; cf. Oldenberg, *Noten*. s. v. and on 1, 149, 2.

(b) *hinvanti*, like *hitám* in VIII, 43, 25.

(c) The "illusion" is that he will milk a cow that gives no milk, cf. st. 9 d.

Stanza 6 :

(a) *yás tityája sacivídaṁ sákhāyaṁ*
(b) *ná tásya vācí ápi bhāgó asti* /
(c) *yád īm śṛṇóti álakaṁ śṛṇoti*
(d) *nahí pravéda sukṛtásya pánthām* //

Translation:

"He, who has abandoned an intimate friend (in the lurch), has no

part (to play) in the Speech any more. Whoever listens to such a one, listens in vain ; for he knows not the way of virtue."

Notes:

The stanza is repeated in Ait. Ā. III, 2, 4, 3 ; Tait. Ā. I, 3, 1 ; II, 15, 1.

Stanza 7:

(a) *akṣaṇvántaḥ kárṇavantaḥ sákhāyo*
(b) *manojavéṣu ásamā babhūvuḥ /*
(c) *ādaghnā́sa upakakṣā́sa u tve*
(d) *hradā́ iva snā́tvā u tve dadṛśre //*

Translation:

"Friends, who have eyes and ears, are themselves unequal in the quicknesses of their mind. Some appear (like pools that are) reaching upto the mouth or the shoulder ; the others, like pools that are fit (i. e. deep enough) for bathing in."

Notes:

See N. I, 9.

(b) The pāda speaks of the ready wit and of the art of improvisation in the contests connected with the sacrifice ; see 8 a-b where the root *sam-yaj-* is used.

(cd) The dissimilarity of the expressions of the mind are compared here with that of the pools. Some pools are quite suitable for baths because they have, as Sāyaṇa says, still water, or undecieving depths. The water of others is very much agitated so that their waves rise upto the mouth or the shoulder and that one cannot be sure of their depths. These latter are therefore dangerous. According to Sāyaṇa, those pools whose waves reach up to mouth are comparable with persons of 'moderate' insight ; those whose waves rise up to the shoulder only, are comparable with men of 'meagre' insight, whilst those which are suitable for bath, are like men of 'supreme' insight. So also Durga on N. I, 9.

(d) *snā́tvā* : Arnold, in his 'Metrical Commentary' (*Ved. Metre*, p. 321), suggests : probably *snā́tuā*, omitting *u*. This suggestion is incorrect, for the word is, as the Padapāṭha shows, *snātvā́ḥ*, adj. pl. to *hradāḥ*.

Stanza 8 :

(a) *hṛdā́ taṣṭéṣu mánaso javéṣu*
(b) *yád brāhmaṇā́ḥ saṁyájante sákhāyaḥ /*
(c) *átrā́ha tuaṁ ví jahur vedyā́bhir*
(d) *óhabrahmāṇo ví caranti u tve //*

Translation :

"When the Brāhmaṇas as friends sacrifice unitedly, the flashes of the spirit being shaped in their hearts (i. e. being couched in suitable words), they leave (many a) one with deliberations ; and the others, whose devotional speeches find approval, step aside."

Notes :

See N. XIII, 13.

(c) *tuam :* two-syllabled.

(d) *óhabrahman-* adj. a technical expression meaning 'one whose sacred or devotional Speech finds approval (both among friends and gods)' (see Geldner, *Ved. Stud.* II, 182, & III, 69 ; and Oldenberg *Noten.* s. v.) ; as against *tuam* in c, who lags behind in the matter of Sacred Speech.

Stanza 9 :

(a) *imé yé nárvāṅ ná paráś cáranti*
(b) *ná brāhmaṇāso ná sutékarāsaḥ /*
(c) *tá eté vācam abhipádya pāpáyā*
(d) *sirís tántraṁ tanvate áprajajñayaḥ //*

Translation :

"Those who move neither nearer nor father, who are neither (true) Brāhmaṇas nor co-operators in Soma-preparations,—they handle the Speech in a sinful manner and stretch ignorantly the flowing water (?) as a web."

Notes :

See BDh. II, 6, 11, 32.

(a) 'Those who cannot get along', cf. the *sthirápītaḥ* in st. 5 ; in effect, those who are totally ignorant in the art of the Sacred Speech.

(b) *sutékara-* adj. 'active in the Soma-preparation' ; for the accent, see Wackernagel, *AG.* II, § 88 b (p. 210) ; however, cf. Oldenberg (*Noten.* s. v.) who suggests the not impossible meaning of the compd. (Bahuvr.) : 'those whose hands are (busy) in Soma-preparation.'

(d) *sirīḥ*, occurring only here, is obscure. Ludwig : 'Water (sand ?)'. Perhaps, 'the rain falling like threads.' The whole stanza refers to a simile for a profitless activity. Sāyaṇa : *sīriṇo bhūtvā tantraṁ kṛṣilakṣaṇaṁ tanvate.*—*áprajajñi-* adj. 'ignorant' if connected with √*jñā-* as Sāyaṇa does ; or 'fruitless', from √*jan-* with ŚB. II, 3, 1, 14, as Bergaigne and Oldenberg take.

Stanza 10 :

(a) *sárve nandanti yaśásāgatena*
(b) *sabhāsāhéna sákhia sákhāyaḥ* /
(c) *kilbiṣaspṛt pituṣáṇir hí eṣām*
(d) *áraṁ hitó bhávati vājināya* //

Translation :

"All the friends feel delighted over that friend, who, adorned with fame, comes off victorious in the assembly. For, he averts blame from them, and wins food for them : he becomes well-prepared for a (further) contest."

Notes :

(a) See Ait. B. I, 13, 7 ; ĀŚS. IV, 4, 4.
(b) See Ait. B. I, 13, 9.
(c) Pratīka : *kilbiṣaspṛt pituṣaṇiḥ* : Ait. B. I, 13, 10.
(d) See Ait. B. I, 13, 14.— *hitáḥ* from √*hi-*, see st. 5.

Stanza 11 :

(a) *ṛcáṁ tvaḥ póṣam āste pupuṣváān*
(b) *gāyatráṁ tvo gāyati śákvarīṣu* /
(c) *brahmā́ tvo vádati jātavidyā́ṁ*
(d) *yajñásya mā́trāṁ ví mimīta u tvaḥ* //

Translation :

"One sits there increasing the store of stanzas, the other sings the *gāyatrī*-melody upon the *śakvarī*-stanzas. One, as a *Brahmán*, recites his innate knowledge, the other determines the measure of the sacrifice."

Notes :

See N. I, 8.—The stanza depicts, as already remarked by Bloomfield (*SBE.* XLII, Introduction, pp. lxiv f.), "the activity of four priests at a Śrauta—sacrifice" : the hotar (a), the udgātar (b), the adhvaryu (d), and the brahmán (c). "The association of the first three priests with the three Vedic catagories *ṛk*, *sāman* and *yajuḥ*, is expressed with a degree of clearness commensurate with the character of the hymn which is in the nature of a *brahmodya*. But the *brahmán* has no peculiar Veda ; . . . . his knowledge is that of the entire Veda, the *sarvavidyā* (Tait. B. III, 10, 11, 4,), religious knowledge as a whole. By means of this knowledge he is able to assume in the ritual practices the function of correcting the mistakes of the other priests, whose knowledge is more mechanical. The brahmán is as it were the stage-manager in the sacerdotal drama, the physician of the sacrifice when it is attacked by the disease of faulty execution (ŚB. XIV,

2, 2, 19) ; he is the mind of the sacrificer (ŚB. XIV, 6, 1, 7). As such he is also conversant with the mystic aspects of the divine powers, the powers of nature, and the details of the sacrifice."—As this stanza lacks the contextual relationship with the preceding ones, it may not originally belong to this hymn.

To sum up, let me summarise and rearrange the leading ideas contained in the hymn. Here, the current of thoughts runs in the main something like this : (i) The Sacred Speech was first invented by the ancient Ṛṣis (see Tait. B. II, 8, 8, 5) ; the Ṛṣis felt they had in the inmost of their being something latent that was the best and the purest. This something they made manifest and shaped into the Sacred Speech (1 cd ; 2 ab). (ii) Through the sacrifice the Ṛṣis got the clue of this Sacred Speech (3 a) and having found her, they cultivated her in their circles of mutual friendship and in their communion and co-operation between colleagues (1 d; 2 c; 8 b); the Sacred Speech bears the auspicious sign of this friendship in herself (2 d). Hence the repeated emphasis on the unity and friendship among colleagues (e. g. 8 b ; 10 ab). (iii) The Sacred Speech is not accessible to every one but only to the chosen few (4)[1] ; for the spiritual capacity of the colleagues vary in each case just as the depth of ponds vary in each pond (7). (iv) He who sins against friendship, or leaves a comrade in the lurch, has no part in the Speech and troubles himself in vain about her (6). (v) So also he, who becomes stiff and stout in the matter of friendship (5) and does not offer active co-operation in sacrifices, handles the Speech in a sinful manner (9). (vi) In the contests and assemblies, the dull fellow is marked out from him who, adorned with fame, comes off victorious (8 ; 10). The end refers to the division of the Sacred Speech amongst the four major priests at the sacrifice.

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1. Like the Ātman in Kaṭhop. 2, 23.

REVIEWS

PANJABI SUFI POETS : by Dr. Lajwanti Ramakrishna, Ph. D.
(Oxford University Press, Bombay. pp. 137. Price : Rs. 5/-)

THIS is a stimulating study of the Sufi poets, who lived in the Panjab and wrote in the language of the province between A. D. 1460 to 1900. The ources of information and instruction, tapped by the author, are : manuscripts found in public and private libraries, accounts furnished by the caretakers of shrines, recitals by musicians attached to the tombs of the saints and the scanty stock of printed and lithographed books available on the subject. The spirit in which the theme has been treated is thus described by Dr. A. C. Woolner in the Foreword, contributed by him : "In this book Truth is the ideal pursued along the dusty tracks of research by a Panjabi woman."

Every student of religion knows that the core and crux of Sufism is love of God and God of Love. A Sufi, therefore, is often an enemy of the man-made code of morality because not seldom does the latter impose limitations on the evolution and expression of that love. He is treated as a social outcast. Then is his hour of trial. If he succumbs to the tyranny of tradition and the text-bound truth-seekers, he signs his own death-warrant. If, on the other hand, he drinks cheerfully the goblet of gregarious hatred he is rewarded with the freedom and fullness of the deathless spirit. So it comes to pass that in course of time the Sufis are divided like the sheep and the goats into two groups.

The Sufi poets, whose lives, ways of worship and works are considered critically in the book under review, are : Sheikh Ibrahim Farid Sani, Madho Lal Hussain, Sultan Bahu, Bullhe Shah, Ali Haidar, Fard Faqir, Hashim Shah, Karam Ali, and some minor poets, the prince among these being Bullhe Shah. An extract or two from some of his songs will show his own as well as his fellow-seekers' attitude of "amoral" non-conformity:

"Everything is the image of God, somewhere it is visible, somewhere hidden . . . The Lord is not separate from us, apart from the Lord nothing else exists."

"Love and Law are struggling (in the human heart). Law says : Go to the priest and learn the rules and regulations. Love answers : One letter (i. e. *Aliph* standing for God, the Alpha of everything) is enough, shut up and put away other books . . . . Law says : O faithful one, come, let us go on pilgrimage and cross the bridge. Love answers : The door of the Beloved is *Ka'aba*, from there I will not stir. Law says : On the cross we placed Mansur. Love answers : You did well, you made him enter the door of the Beloved. The rank of love is the highest heaven, the crown of creation."

But not all of them have such catholicity of the heart. There are some who are quite orthodox in their understanding as well as interpretation of the Truth of Life and Love, their teacher being the *Koran*.

These seekers composed their songs in the spoken language and script of the common people and in a variety of forms like *Kafi*, *Siharfi*, *qissa*, *bait*, etc., and, as such, they exercised a great cultural influence in as much as they spread, through their songs, both "sweetness and light." And that light and that sweetness persisted despite the political darkness and discord of the times. Though they came from across the frontiers of Indian thought yet, before long, they absorbed and assimilated the best in it, to the enrichment both of Islam as well as Hinduism. But the joy of this "union" lasted up to the end of the eighteenth century, after which it dwindled down into the separative sectarianism of the tradition and the text.

Panjabi Sufi Poets is a pioneer work in the field of medieval and post-medieval mysticism in the Land of the Five Rivers. It bears on every page the stamp of strenuous effort and sifting enquiry. Necessarily, in parts, it is sketchy in treatment of some of the poets, because of the self-effacement of the seeker-singer so far as a written record of his life and labours is concerned, and because the remnant of "reasonable" presentation, derived and distilled from the babel of traditions and tongues, is generally not very detailed. The translations of the songs from Panjabi into English, contained in the book, are tantalizing, for they whet the reader's appetite for more, and yet more. *Panjabi Sufi Poets* marks an important milestone in the history not only of Panjabi mysticism but also of comparative mysticism. As such, Doctor Lajwanti Ramakrishna deserves the congratulations and thanks of the students of spiritual self-expression on her highly commendable achievement.

G. M.

HISTORY OF CLASSICAL SANSKRIT LITERATURE : by Kavyavinoda Sahityaratnakara M. Krishnamachariar, M. A., M. L., Ph. D., M. R. A. S., of London. Published by Jaya & Co., Madras, 1937. pp. CXIX 1120.

Price Rs. 10/- (inland) and 15 *s* (foreign).

In the volume under review the author has tried to survey "the vast expanse of Classical Literature" from the earliest times to the present day "on the model of the standard work of foreign literature." A list of the chapter-heads will give an idea of the contents of the book : I. Epics,

Puranas and Tantras, II. Sravyakavyas, III. Prose-writings, IV. Drsyakavyas, V. Sahitya-Sastra, appended with a chapter on Prosody or Metrics. The book has also a learned Introduction dealing with several useful topics of general interest and an Index of authors and their works (in Sanskrit), "followed by a small supplement (in English) on miscellaneous matters."

The author's conception of "Classical Sanskrit Literature" seems to be limited, since he has not taken cognisance of the Scientific Literature as a whole as well as of Tantra, Bauddha and Jain Literatures in Sanskrit. Nevertheless, the book has certain outstanding merits in that it contains separate chapters on '*Citrakavya*,' '*Dutakavya*,' '*Poetesses*,' etc., full of facts abouts those subjects which have been hitherto unknown.

The treatment is, on the whole, satisfactory and the style simple and quite suitable for historical books. All the topics are introduced by an exposition of the rhetorical definitions ; and the references cited are full and exhaustive and will, therefore, be of much help for special studies. The publication is frankly the first of its kind by an Indian scholar and is an ample proof of what careful research can achieve towards the reconstruction of a history of Classical Sanskrit Literature. A glance at the long bibliography detailing a list of sources utilised will show the labour the book has entailed.

The absence of chronology in the treatment of the *Mahakavyas* detracts much from the historical value of the book ; and the printing and the quality of paper are far from satisfactory. However, the book has a value for which it may safely be recommended to students and scholars interested in the subject.

Nagendra Nath Chakravarti.

SELF-EXPRESSION AND THE INDIAN SOCIAL PROBLEM :

by Satya Dass.

Published by Sharma Niwas, Chatterjee Road, Lahore.

THE author deserves notice for finding in self-expression a sure remedy for the social evils of India. But, unfortunately, he dogmatically assumes certain propositions and does not care to support them by reasons. He, for example, accepts without criticism such propositions as "Self-expression is the means to self-realization," and "Expression is the result of internal activity within the thing itself." All through the book attempts have been made to break with the past and to strike down the fetters of existing religions. But the author is perhaps forgetful of the fact that

traditional religion is the most potent factor in a man's life and that the present is only a resultant of the past. The latter portion of the book is filled with various maxims, precepts and formulas. the great majority of which are merely dogmatic.

B. G. R.

ART AND TRADITION : by Asit Kumar Haldar.

Published by Lakshmi Narain Agarwal, Agra, pp. 144, Price, Rs. 2/8/-

SJ. ASIT KUMAR HALDAR, Principal, Lucknow Government School of Art, is a well-known figure in the field of Indian Art. It is but natural that his opinions on art should receive the attention of the public. We therefore went through very carefully all the fourteen chapters of his recently published book, *Art and Tradition.* We confess we were sadly disappointed. The author, whose conception of the History of Art is rather vague, lacks that mental discipline and intellectual alterness which are needed for an analytical survey of the important subject, he has tackled so lightheartedly. He has used words and expressions whose implication and meaning he is himself not sure of. For example, when he says, "The negroid art which has got no tradition . . . ." one suspects that either he misconstrues the meaning of the word *tradition* or is innocent of even the most elementary facts about the Negroid races.

His opinions on Indian art are even more absurd. Here is a sample : "We did not find in the paintings of Ajanta such perfect and spirited representation of horse as those in the pictures of processions at Bagh. These are such as to remind one of the life-like animals drawn by the great modern artist Landseer" (page 126). There was a time when European historians and critics misjudged the excellence of Indian art, but even they did not dare bring in a mediocre artist like Landseer for the purpose of a comparison with the Bagh paintings. It is very painful for us to see that the author has not yet got over the temptation of introducing foreign names.

The author has made out a long list of the modern Indian artists who were "primarily" his students. He might have consulted them before stamping them with such gratuitous honour.

The book contains a Foreword by the Marquess of Zetland, which is perhaps the only excuse of its publication.

Benodebehari Mukherjee.

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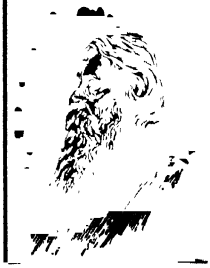

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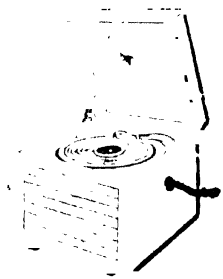

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THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

November | *New Series*, Vol. IV, Part III. | 1938

RETRIBUTION*

Rabindranath Tagore

In the upper sky, lamped by science,
the night forgets itself,
while in the underground gloom
lean hunger and bloated voracity
crash against each other
till the earth begins to tremble
and the pillars of triumph
are perilously cracked,
swaying on the brink of gaping gulfs.

Do not howl in fear or angrily judge God,
Let the swelling evil burst itself in pain
and vomit out its accumulated filth.
When the victims of a carnivorous rage
are dragged by the competition of ravenous fangs,
let the hideousness of the blood soaked blasphemy
arouse divine anger heralding a heroic peace
out of an awful retribution.

* Translated by the poet from one of his recent unpublished poems in Bengali.—*Ed.*

They throng in the church
in a primitive frenzy of faith made keen by fear
which hopes to flatter their God
into a complacent mood,
into a feebleness of leniency.
They feel half sure that peace will be brought down
into this demented earth
by the mere volume of their wailing
uttered in sacred text.
They have confidence in their indulgent God
who may send them timely wisdom
to divert all sacrifices needed for the worship
towards the less strong
leaving their own soiled hoardings undivided.

But let us hope,
for the sake of the dignity of moral justice in this world,
that God will never suffer to be cheated of his due
by the miserly manipulation of a diplomatic piety
carefully avoiding all cost to itself,
that a terrible penance may have to be passed through
to its ultimate end,
leaving no remnant of poison
in a treacherously healing scar.

CREDO

Nicholas Roerich

LYSIPPUS was a blacksmith's apprentice before ever he became a sculptor. The heart of a great artist has never been withered by anguish of a reflective spirit or distress of a hungry body. There is no drought which can destroy the seed of creativeness, once it is ready to sprout. Amid the most burdensome labours the folk-song sounds a call to renewed creativeness. It is implanted in the quality of each task. Art, knowledge, labour, these are sons of that same creativeness which guides and uplifts.

From the most ancient times the aims of art have been characterized by the most diverse words. However multiform these definitions may be, everywhere their essence is perceived to be one and the same. First of all from art is demanded persuasiveness. It is said that to be convincing one must see through beauty. And so it is. To view with the eye of beauty, this means one must comprehend the very best in composition. What sort of composition is this? Much has been said about conventional premeditated arrangement, about a tendency to pretentious subjectiveness. Many times people have tried to express their just indignation at something which in their opinion weighed down the lofty concept of creativeness and rendered it incapable of soaring flight.

Such in reality is conventional composition. In the last analysis artificial composition will always provoke boredom and weariness. But there is also another composition which is natural and yet indefinable in words. The artist may see so clearly and constructively that, so to speak, you do not miss a word of his song. It is precisely as in nature, when the most varied elements are combined in complete harmony. When one examines a cluster of crystals it is forever amazing how, even when unexpected forms are encountered, they always make up a harmonious conclusive whole. Thus it is in all artistic creativeness. Its productions have crystallized so naturally, that any argument about composition simply falls to the ground. In such a crystal of creativeness is expressed that convincingness which can be definitely felt, but words will be powerless to define it or to give any recipe for it.

When a picture has been naturally built up, you can add or subtract nothing. You cannot shift its parts, and this for the reason, not that you must not violate "symmetry," but that you must not deprive the picture of its vital balance. You have the desire to live with such a picture because

you will find in it a constant source of joy. Each object which sheds joy around it represents a veritable treasure. You are indifferent to what school or trend it belongs as an *objet d'art* ; it will be a persuasive guide of the Beautiful and will bestow upon you many hours in which you will feel love for life. You will be grateful to him who has helped you meet life with a smile, and you will take good care of this hieroglyph of Beauty. And you will become better, not at the dry command of morality but from the creative radiation of the heart. In you will awaken the Creator which is latent in the depths of the consciousness.

In its best disclosures, science proves to be art. Such striking scientific syntheses are forever imprinted upon the human brain, as something overwhelmingly conclusive. Then science ceases to be a conventional synchronization of facts and advances triumphantly into the domain of new cognition, leading humanity along with it.

Creativeness, whether it be in symbols or in art or in any of the realms ruled by the Muses of the classical world, will be attractive, that is to say, convincing. Science is already entering such immense fields as thought. Now it is coming to light that thought acts according to some sort of laws not yet set down in human words, yet already perceptible in series of experiments being carried on at present. The mind of the thinker will be a creative one.

It has always been required of art that it be creative. This demand is no more than just. After all, art cannot be other than creative. Be it a most intricate picture, landscape or portrait, once this work emerges from the hands of the true artist, it will be creative. In the complexity of present day concepts, it may be that the very idea of creativeness has fallen to pieces. Sometimes people begin to assume that creativeness must be expressed in forms having nothing in common with reality. Some may still remember the joke originating at a French exhibition, where a picture turned out to have been painted by a donkey's tail. In their quests of creativeness, instead of liberation (for creativeness must always be free) people begin to seek some new limitation and conventional recipes. In this is forgotten the most fundamental condition of creativeness ; first of all it does not tolerate anything conventionally imposed and self-restrictive.

For example, let us cite Gauguin. Can one possibly call his pictures conventional or tendentional ? Precisely in freedom of creativeness Gauguin strode over all the limiting frames of his subject as well as any sort of restrictive technical rules. He always remains a creative artist, that is to say, a true and convincing master-craftsman. The power of persuasiveness of this artist is not in any recipes or rules devised by the reason. He has created just as a bird sings which cannot but sing, because its song is the

expression of its essential nature. His persuasiveness lies in the fact that he has been capable of viewing each of his pictures as a part of creative nature.

The inner vision of a picture, to the extent that it is requisite and convincing, will always be far outside the methods of technical rules. Creators of all times and peoples have created their productions not alone by intuitively seeing them in their best form of expression, but they have extended their creativeness to the very material in which they worked. The sculptor, having inspected the block of marble, creates from it the best possible. The master-wood-carver employs each quality of his piece of wood in working it into the forms appearing to his creative eye. The painter intuitively selects colourful material for each of his expressions. The artist would probably be unable to explain afterward why precisely he employed oils or tempera or watercolour or pastel. And so it must be. Why does an orator raise and lower his intonation ? Why does the musician discover those ineffably enchanting harmonies, which even he cannot always repeat ?

Intuition is being much discussed at present. Volumes are being written about intuitive philosophy. The solution of problems is being sought not only in calculations but also in intuitive synthesis. One artist has said : "Do thus, in order that people may believe you." Another, discussing a certain realist, asked : "Does he have to depict all the wayside filth just because it exists in reality ?" Yet at the same time let us not condemn realism. Of course it is only a striving for the actuality, which in turn produces that convincingness for the sake of which one must view with the eye of beauty.

Recently much has been said about synthesis of art. In all the arts, synthesis is nothing but a condensation of all good possibilities. Once Brülov * said, in jest, that art is extraordinarily easy : "one has but to take the right colour and apply it in the right place." In essence the master and great technician spoke truly. Precisely one must do what is needful in applying the colour, and something whispers what this "needful" is. The master knows when it would be impossible to do otherwise, yet when you ask him by what canons and rules he has done exactly so and not otherwise, no artist can explain to you what laws he followed in doing as he did.

Comparing the works of art of different times and peoples, we see that frequently the most apparently diverse productions go together excellently in a common grouping. One can easily picture to oneself how certain primitives, Persian miniatures, *objets d'art* of Africa, China and Japan, Gauguin and Van Gogh, can all appear in one collection and even

* The famous Russian artist of the middle of the last century.

hang on one wall. Not the material or technique but something else enables these entirely different examples, to live together in harmony. They are all truly products of creativeness. Moreover, all kinds of art and sculpture, painting, mosaics, ceramics, in a word, absolutely all things in which have been expressed the creative outburst of a master, will be friends, and not mutually exclusive antagonists.

Each of us has often listened to contradictory pronouncements. One says that he understands only the old school. Another vehemently raises the objection that all must be in movement and therefore he finds joy only in the modernists, even though their works may be harsh and strident. Some esteem only oil painting, while others admire the delicate water-color. Some affirm that they like only "finished pictures," while others assert that they treasure sketches most highly, as the first inspired impulses of the creator. Some can be enraptured only by monumental works, while others feel warm affection for miniatures. Some limit their taste to the grandiose, others find repose of the spirit in small artistic bibelots. Do all such limitations denote limitedness of soul on the part of the art-lover, or rather, may it not be that these amateurs have simply dammed up their possibilities ?

Very often one's preferences and one's collection depend upon some accidental initial impulse. Perhaps sometime a man has heard that a picture is painted with oils, and this expression took root in his brain. Perhaps in the family circle a child has been impressed by a word spoken about water-colours, or he may have been given a set of them, and from this chance beginning has followed his interest in precisely this medium. In all the manifestations of life and particularly in the matter of artistic impulses, one often has occasion to encounter initial fortuity. Indeed, these "accidents" often prove to be far from matters of chance. A man has begun to respond precisely to one thing rather than another, and in this may have been expressed his dormant accumulations. Spring has come and buds open out naturally which have long been asleep through the winter cold. New creativeness has begun !

What a beautiful word—"creativenses" ! In various languages it rings out appealingly and convincingly. In its own way it speaks about something latently possible, about something triumphant and conclusive. So mighty and beautiful is the word "creativeness" that all conventional obstacles are forgotten in the face of it. People rejoice at this word as a symbol of advancement. The command of creativeness covers over all whisperings of the limited mind about rules, about materials, about all that so often answered with the suppressive word "impossible." To creativeness all is possible. It leads humanity along with itself. Creativeness is the banner of youth. Creativeness is progress. Creativeness is mastery of new

possibilities. Creativeness is peaceful conquest over stagnation and formlessness. In creativeness has already been implanted movement. Creativeness is expression of the fundamental laws of the universe. In other words, in creativeness is expressed beauty.

It has been said that beauty will save the world. People have smiled at this formula with sympathy or with derogation, but no one can refute it. There are certain axioms which may cause wonder but which one cannot overthrow. Humanity dreams about freedom, it inscribes this great hieroglyph upon the facades of buildings. At the same time mankind exerts every effort to restrict and reduce this concept. Great freedom of thought is manifested in true creativeness. That will be true which is beautiful and convincing. In the secret places of the heart, for which man himself is responsible, has been implanted trustworthy judgment as to what true conviction is, what creativeness is, what Beauty is.

As Velasquez said, "not a picture but truth itself."

Let us recall two excellent passages from Anatole France's *Garden of Epicurus.*

"Whatever wins its vogue only by some trick of novelty and whim of aesthetic taste ages quickly. Fashions change in Art as in everything else. There are catch-words that come up and pretend to be new, just like the gowns from the great dressmakers in the Rue de la Paix ; like them, they only last a season. At Rome in the decadent periods of art, the statues of the Empresses showed the hair dressed in the latest mode. Soon these coiffures looked ridiculous, so they had to be changed and the figures were given marble wigs. It were only fitting that a style as rococo as these figures should be re-periwigged every year. The fact is, in these days when we live so fast, literary schools last but a few years, sometimes but a few months. I know young writers whose style is already two or three generations out of date and seems quite archaic. This is doubtless the result of the amazing progress of industry and machinery which sweeps modern communities along. In the days of MM. de Goncourt and railways we could still spend a fairly long time upon a certain form of artistic writing. But since the telephone, literature, which depends upon contemporary manners, renews its formulas with an altogether disconcerting rapidity. So we will merely agree with M. Ludovic Halévy that the simple form is the only one adapted to travel peacefully, not down the centuries, that would be assuming too much, but at least down the years.

"The only difficulty is to define what the simple form is, and one must admit this difficulty to be a great one.

"Nature, at any rate as we can know her and in milieux adapted to life,

offers us nothing simple, and art cannot aspire to greater simplicity than nature. Yet we understand well enough what we mean when we say that such and such a style is simple and such and such another is not.

"I will say this much then, that if there is no simple style, there are styles which appear simple, and it is just these which carry youth and longevity with them. It remains but to inquire whence they get this fortunate appearance. Doubtless we shall conclude that they owe it, not to their being less rich than others in divers elements, but rather because they form a whole in which all the parts are so well blended that they cannot be distinguished separately. A good style, in fact, is like yonder beam of light which shines in at my window as I write, and which owes its pure brilliancy to the intimate combination of the seven colours of which it is composed. A simple style is like white light. It is complex, but does not seem so. This is only a simile after all, and we know what such parallels are worth when it is not a poet who draws them. But what I wished to make plain is this ; in language the true simplicity which is good and desirable is only apparent, and it results solely from fine co-ordination and sovereign economy of the several parts of the whole."

"If you would taste true art and experience a profound impression before a picture, examine the frescoes of Ghirlandajo in Santa-Maria-Novella at Florence, depicting the *Birth of the Virgin*. The old master shows us the room of delivery. Anna, upraised on the bed, is neither young nor beautiful, but one sees immediately that she is a good house-wife. She has ranged at the head of the bed a jar of sweetmeats and two pomegranates. A serving-maid, standing between the bed and the wall, offers her an ewer on a platter. The babe has just been washed and the copper basin still stands in the middle of the floor. Now the infant Mary is taking the breast ; her wet-nurse for the nonce is a young and beautiful lady of the city, a mother herself, who has offered her bosom to the end that this child and her own, having imbibed life at the same fount, may keep the savour of it in common, and by force of their blood love each other as brother and sister. Near her stands another young woman, or rather a young girl, like her in feature, perhaps her sister, richly dressed, wearing the hair drawn away from her brow and plaited at the temples like Aemilia Pia ; she stretches out her two arms toward the infant with a charming gesture betraying the awakening of the maternal instinct. Two noble ladies, clad in the Florentine fashion, are coming in to offer their felicitations. They are attended by a serving-maid bearing on her head a basket of watermelons and grapes. This figure is of a large simple beauty ; draped in flowing garments confined by a girdle, the ends of which float in the

wind, she seems to intervene in this pious domestic scene like a dream of pagan antiquity. Well, in this warm room, in these gentle womanly faces, I see expressed all the life of Florence and the fine flower of the early Renaissance. This goldsmith's son, this master of the Primitives has revealed in his painting, which has the clearness and brilliancy of a summer dawn all the secret of that courtly epoch in which he had the good fortune to live and which possessed so great a charm of its own that his contemporaries themselves were wont to exclaim : 'The gods are good indeed ! Oh, thrice-blessed age !'

"It is the artist's part to love life and to show us that it is beautiful. Without him, we might well doubt the fact!"

Leonardo ordained :

"He who despises the art of painting, thus despises a philosophic and refined conception of the universe, because the art of painting is the daughter, or rather grand-child of Nature. Everything that exists was born from Nature, and has borne in its turn the science of painting. This is why I say that painting is the grand-child of Nature and relative of God. He who blasphemes the art of painting, blasphemes Nature."

"The painter should be all-embracing. O, artist, may thy versatility be as infinite as the manifestations of Nature. Continuing what God began, strive to multiply not human deeds, but the eternal creations of Gods. Never imitate any one. Let every master-piece of yours be a new manifestation of Nature."

History records the manifold remarkable achievements of Leonardo da Vinci in all domains of life. He left amazing mathematical writings, he investigated the nature of flying, he conducted medical researches, and was a distinguished anatomist. He invented musical instruments, studied the chemistry of paint, he loved the wonders of natural history. He adorned cities with magnificent buildings, palaces, schools, libraries ; he built large military barracks, constructed one of the best ports in the Adriatic and planned and built great waterways ; he founded mighty forts, constructed war machinery, sketched military plans. . . . Great was his versatility.

But after all these remarkable achievements, he remained in the memory of the world as an artist—as the great artist. Is this not a true victory of Art ?

Himalayas, 1938.

NATURE AND HUMAN WILL

A note on *The Dynasts* and the present World-situation.

By Dr. Amiya Chakravarty

"WAR'S red retinue"[1] marches on ; Neutral Will operates on its mechanism :

> So the Will heaves through Space, and moulds the times,
> With mortals for Its fingers ! We shall see
> Again men's passions, virtues, visions, crimes,
> Obey resistlessly
> The mutative, unmotived, dominant Thing
> Which sways in brooding dark their wayfaring ![2]

Poignant scenes of war are portrayed in *The Dynasts* in a variety of detail ; scenes which are all too evocative of the accounts of War that we are now being served through newspapers. Human passions are shown in their brutality ; Napoleon's cold ruthlessness in parting with Josephine is woven into a general pattern of horror and callousness.[3] His semi-pious protestations about Nature's inexorable necessity[4] sound like the blatant words of the tyrant determined to work out his designs. The ostensible reason given for his decision to remarry is shown to be devoid even of normal

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1. Semi-Chorus II, Rumours (Part II, Act II, Scene 5). In all editions up to the one of 1926 the word "purposive" instead of "mutative" is used ; the change apparently came as an afterthought, and is in every way an improvement : "purposive" and "unmotived" going together rather darkened the meaning ; the idea of mutation, moreover, is in line with Hardy's main philosophy.

2. The Spirit of the Years, Part II, Act II, Scene 8.

3. Not only does Napoleon rudely repulse Josephine but he goes on to say :

> And this much likewise you must promise me ;
> To act in the formalities thereof
> As if you shaped them of your own free will.

To which Josephine answers,

> How can I—when no free-will's left in me ?

Napoleon thunders back :

> You are a willing party—do you hear ?
> (Part II, Act V, Scene 2, pp. 261-262.)

4. "O come, now,...Nature's a dial, whose shade no hand
puts back..." (Part II, Act II, Scene 6).

human instinct for perpetuating a family tradition ; it is depicted as a mere act of cowardly conscience, of defensive action projected into the future. Conscious that his own wrongs will one day expose him, he is thinking in terms of posthumous self-justification.[1]

So ; I must send down shoots to future time
Who'll plant my standard and my story there.

Side by side with this brutality and Josephine's unavailing sorrow we are given a series of pictures of common sufferers in the village, citizens, householders, who, like the fallen Queen, are helpless victims of unmerciful events. The cry of one of the citizens rings and reverberates through the poignant scene : [2]

Author of all our ills. . .
Our harvest fields and fruits he tramples on
Accumulating ruin in our land. . . .
Time never can efface the glint of tears
In palaces, in shops, in fields, in cots,
From women widowed, son-less, fatherless. . . (p. 227).

There are incidents, too, of those strange moving acts of friendship between helpless men made "enemies" by the strange wickedness of rulers and misleaders of men. Pity says : [3]

What do I see but thirsty, throbbing bands
From these inimic hosts defiling down
In homely need towards the little stream
That parts their enmities, and drinking there !
They get to grasping hands across the rill,
Sealing their sameness as earth's sojourners.—
What more could plead the wryness of the times
Than such unstudied piteous pantomimes !

The Spirit Ironic dwells on it to drive the point home, and says of the Will, "The spectacle of Its instruments, set to riddle one another through, and then to drink together in peace and concord, is where the humour comes

1. Part II, Act V, Scene 1, p. 254.

2. This is closely parallel to the chorus in T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*, where the Chorus of Women tell of the havocs of war....

3. Part II, Act IV, Scene 5.

in, and makes the play worth seeing !" Such incidents are too vitally near us to need any comment.[1]

The ghastly battle of Albuera takes place ; the distraught King is told of this "Victory"; it mixes the nightmare of reality with the nightmare of his failing sanity. Pity expresses again its inability to interpret such reckless persistence of destructive forces as the action of a merely neutral "unmaliced, unimpassioned, nescient Will" (Act VI, Scene 5). Albuera marks another stage in Hardy's drama, when out of the depths of anguish breaks out a clearer rush of faith from the torn heart of Pity. Pity prays ; it does not know why ; it yields to faith.[2]

Something within me aches to pray
To some Great Heart, to take away
This evil day, this evil day !

The usual background of sharp contrast is provided by the passionate scepticism of the Chorus Ironic which remarks :

. . . Thou'lt pray to It :—
But where do Its compassions sit ?
Yea, where abides the heart of It ?

How can there be in the vast moving cauldron of matter any room for such a thing as a "heart"; so, the Chorus Ironic continues,

Is it where sky-fires flame and flit,
Or solar creatures spew and spit,
Or ultra-stellar night-webs knit ?

What is Its shape ? Man's counterfeit ?
That turns in some far sphere unlit
The Wheel which drives the Infinite ?

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1. A recent example in literature of such a tragic and curiously pathetic spectacle is provided in Mr. Wells' story *The Shape of Things* in which an airman, accidentally brought down to earth after having dropped horrible bombs, parts with his gas mask to save a little girl who was about to be choked to death by the deadly yellow gas which he had just been spreading in Everytown. As his own death approaches, the terrible comedy of his dual action makes him burst out into hysterical laughter such as that of the Spirit Ironic.

It is curious to find how, a long time before the World War, Hardy was depicting scenes which could have occurred in one of the latest narratives of war tragedy in modern Europe.

2. Part II, Act VI, Scene 5.

But the Pities are strengthened by the very anguish of overwhelming circumstances, by the multiplying havoc of wars ; their faith is not lost but redeemed and purified, their foundations made more steadfast and secure. It is significant that instead of the elements of tenderness and faith losing their hold on life at the inexorable impact of one grim tragedy succeeding another, the raging storms make the tiny flickering flame shine with unwavering intensity as the story develops.

> . . . Mock on ; Yet I'll go pray
> To some *Great Heart*. . . [1]

cries the warm human core of Compassion and there is no answer that Reason or Irony or Sinister Disbelief can give to such a quest ; but there is also nothing to prove that Pity's prayer will be efficacious.

Human faith, of course, cannot maintain itself on the same consistent level, and we shall see repeated lapses into misery, but in this drama Hardy makes it come back and each time attain a yet higher triumph than before. The Pities often fail, and nowhere in the drama have they been given any chance to prove the material basis of their belief—Reason and the Ironic Spirits have as much right to hold on to their opinions so far as the facts and circumstances are concerned—and yet all the other Spirits have to admit from time to time that the Pities proceed on different lines of valuation, that they are not defeated by the impact of events because they continue till the last—as a matter of fact, increasingly so—to apply an inner criterion of feeling and growth of awareness which are obviously beyond the scope of logic.

Albuera is over but the Nemesis is not over ; it has to work itself out through time and dire circumstance. We shall now be given an uncomfortably realistic picture of so-called "peace" ; that is to say, diplomatic peace, which often is a worse form of fanning war passions into flame. Even the raw experience of a recent war fails to stop those political operations which themselves make war inevitable. Prime Minister Percival, in the Interior of Carlton House conferring with the Under-Secretary, gives strange hints of an impending evil, which makes the Under-Secretary say

> Your speech is dark— ;

Percival answers : [2]

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1. Part II, Act VI, Scene 5, 306.
2. Part II, Act VI, Scene 7, 219.

Well, a new war in Europe.
Before the year is out there may arise
A red campaign outscaling any seen.
Russia and France the parties to the strife—
Ay, to the death !

Grimly confirms the chronicle Spirit of the Years, addressing Percival, [1]

Yes, sir ; your text is true,

making Percival shrink and creating a weird, uncanny effect in the room where the politicians sit.

Napoleon, the symbol of the destructive energy in men, will leave no measure untried that leads to the uttermost working out of the tragic show. This *must* happen, no power on earth can check this march of events while humanity has not learnt its lessons. Not that humanity has not had its chances of understanding ; here Hardy makes the Spirit of the Years speak of the Past "traced thick with teachings glimpsed unheedingly."[2] So long as history does not teach us, nothing can. The human will must have the freedom to do wrong as well as right, so that out of its own volition it can shape and modulate Nature's forces and raise the structure of civilisation. "*Teachings glimpsed unheedingly*" have to be learnt by disaster after disaster till they have gone home. This is an inference that the modern mind may draw from *The Dynasts* . in such indications as these, not supported by the different actors in the drama nor fully worked out anywhere in a logical form, Hardy is curiously near to the latest form of "rationalism" or "realism" that we find advocated in modern literature.

Groups of politicians go on plotting, governments move along crooked old grooves of diplomacy, irrespective of human consequences, not caring for individual suffering, so long as greedy militarism is appeased.

The rawest Dynast of the group concerned
Will, for the good or ill of mute mankind,
Down-topple to the dust like soldier Saul,
And Europe's mouldy-minded oligarchs
Be propped anew ; while garments roll in blood
To confused noise, with burning, and fuel of fire.

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1 Part II, Act VI, Scene 7, 250.
2. Part II, Act VI, Scene 7, 320.

Nations shall lose their noblest in the strife,
And tremble at the tidings of an hour ! [1]

The anger and bitterness with which the neutral Spirit of Reason speaks of War and of all forms of evil, whether in thought or in action, should be weighed against its profession of fatalistic philosophy. Coming from the Years, this denunciation of violence has a curiously moving effect. At the same time this attitude should not be stretched to mean more than a noble and sensitive humanitarianism such as we find in the writings of many of the most distinguished of modern intellectual "agnostics". The Spirit of the Years analyses the situation in modern history in those reticent lines above ; no more hint is needed, no other solution can be expected from Reason. The tone of the speech is obvious; optimistic, or pessimistic as one may choose to call it : it does not matter. This is where we stand even now in our own times and in these days of loss of Will, the cold lucidity of Reason and the sarcasm which comes into its speech should act as a challenge to human nature. Hardy has put the whole problem before modern consciousness with vigour ; we shall have further occasion to note how very near he is to the thought tendencies which dominate the poetry of to-day. The problem of the Prime Cause remains ever a mystery ; the vast universe of Nature yet lies unrevealed to our comprehension. Science has but thrown here and there a searchlight into its far-flung depths ; but human psychology is grappling with the task of the purposive Will of man. The modern mind yet feels frustrated by inner fissures of Will ; doubt and dismay sweep through our consciousness ; the external signs in modern poetry seem to be depressing. But the motive forces of our Age, as revealed in the turbulent poetry of our times is, as we shall try to show, very definitely an attempt of the human Will to integrate.

The drama of the human mind thickens, even as the story itself gathers in the variety and vividness of a vast consummation.

On the eve of a darkening horizon, before a thunderstorm, we are bid to

Look all around
Where Europe spreads her crinkled ground,
From Osmanlee to Hekla's Mound,

Hark at the cloud-combed Ural pines ;
See how each, wailful-wise, inclines ;
Mark the mist's labyrinthine lines ;

1. Part II, Act VI, Scene 7, Spirit of the Years.

Behold the tumbling Biscay Bay ;
The Midland main in silent sway ;
As urged to move them, so move they.

No less through regal puppet-shows
The rapt Determinator throes
That neither good nor evil knows ! [1]

The Years uphold the attitude of a vast neutrality, it has dropped its note of passion and bitterness which sometimes alternate with its mood of unaffected, "beyond good and evil"-philosophy of Time and of the recording spirit. "As urged to move them, so move they", both pine trees and clouds, waves and winds and human puppet-shows follow the motions of primaeval Nature. The part that the new factor of human consciousness can play is not mentioned ; that "feelings" or the Pities can be "engaged" in the spectacle is suggested by implication.

But apart from human intervention, we cannot cease hoping, perhaps foolishly, that "Nature" itself will somehow come closer to our aid. So the Pities still hope that

Yet it may wake and understand
Ere Earth unshape,[2]

and they also hope that after it has become awake it will "with knowledge use a painless hand". If knowledge indeed has to operate, let it be made to work less painfully—this is a cry which, as we know, comes from the heart of anguished humanity.

The second book of *The Dynasts* ends on this note.

1. Part II, Act VI, Scene 7, 322.
2. Part II, Act VI, Scene 7, 322.

THE ANTISOPHY OF EGOISM :

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE.

Prof. Baldoon Dhingra, B. A. (Cantab.)

NIETZSCHE is an *antisopher*, a conscious opponent of wisdom, of truth. He denies every obligation of man to be considerate towards his neighbour. He is even convinced that love, consideration for others, and goodness are nothing but weakness. The Jewish-Christian morality to love one's neighbour is a "morality of slaves," and only he is a "master" who, like Stirner's egoist, disregards all restraint, acknowledges no commandment or law, and follows his own caprice. For this selfish caprice Nietzsche coined the high-sounding terms "instinct of freedom" and "will to power."

Nietzsche honours in the criminal the man who is untrammelled by any regard for law, justice, or charity, that is, the egoist *par excellence*. "The advocates of a criminal," he says, "are seldom artists enough to turn the beautiful terribleness of the deed to the advantage of the doer."[1] Imagine, for the defence, a speech as follows : "Gentlemen of the jury, the accused pleads guilty to having committed a murder : I request you, however, to notice how horribly beautiful is his crime. From sheer passion for murder, and as Nietzsche so neatly puts it, 'his soul wanted blood . . . he thirsted for the happiness of the knife,' he decoyed a child to a lonely place, and killed it with exquisite tortures. The terrified looks of the child, its little hands clasped convulsively in despair, the small body trembling and twitching with pain, the beseeching voice and the agonizing cries, none of these, gentlemen of the jury, none of these, mark you, touched this man's heart. I would have you admire his strength of mind, 'the beautiful terribleness of the deed,' and beg you to consider what this man would have accomplished had he been a king."

And so, in like manner, an "advocate" who is an "artist" might "turn the beautiful terribleness of the deed to the advantage of the doer." That the above is no exaggeration, and that the murderer's counsel speaks according to Neitzsche's mind, the following passage emphasizes.

"In my opinion it is repugnant to the delicacy, and still more to

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1. *Thus Spake Zarathustra.*

the hypocrisy of tame domestic animals (that is, modern man), to realize with all their energy the extent to which cruelty constituted the great joy and delight of ancient man, was an ingredient which seasoned all his pleasures, and conversely the extent of the naiveté and innocence with which he manifested his need for cruelty, when he actually made as a matter of principle disinterested malice into a *normal* characteristic of man.

"At any rate the time is not so long past when it was impossible to conceive of royal weddings and national festivals on a grand scale, without executions, tortures, or perhaps an *auto-da-fé*, or similarly to conceive of an aristocratic household, without a creature to serve as a butt for the cruel and malicious baiting of the inmates. The sight of suffering does one good, the infliction of suffering does one more good."[1]

Thus Nietzsche glorifies moral narrowness, and, as the real morality of "masters," contrasts it with the morality of Christianity or that of upright and humane men, a conception he endeavours to make despicable by calling it a "Jewish-Christian morality of salves."

But next to moral narrowness it is narrowness of thought Nietzsche stands charged with. Reason, truth and science are driven from the throne, and foolish caprice, self-chosen narrowness and blindness in the realm of thought are set up in their place.

The stupidity of the selfish man who will neither see nor hear what lies clearly before him, because it runs counter to his selfish interests, is according to Nietzsche, one of the attributes of his ideal of the superman. Since science is founded on reason and truth, it too must fall ; for it interferes with the anarchistic thinker's personal option, it shows him his littlenes in the infinite universe, his dependence on the eternal laws of being. But he, as an egoist, as unique in his kind, does not want to be insignificant and dependent ; he wants to feel himself as God. Hence he will not acknowledge that the whole great earth is only a speck of dust in the infinite space of worlds. For him, for the egoist, the earth must be fixed in the centre of the world, and he again wants to be the centre of this earth ! Away, therefore, with modern astronomy which annihilates one's own importance. "All science nowadays," says Nietzsche, "sets out to talk man out of his present opinion of himself, as though that opinion had been nothing but a bizarre piece of conceit."[2]

Not only in action and thought, but in sensation also, Nietzsche extols selfish caprice and narrowness as the only valid principle. Kant has defined the beautiful as that which pleases generally and without interesting, that

1. *Geneology of Morals.*
2. *Beyond Good and Evil.*

is, without interesting in a selfish, personal way. In opposition to this, Nietzsche declares only that as beautiful which he desires to consider beautiful, namely, that which flatters his senses or is in any way subservient to his craving for enjoyment or to his vanity. Anything beautiful in itself does not exist for him. He laughs at those who are simple enough to believe that an artist admires in his model only the ideal form, and he praises Stendhal for defining the beautiful as *une promesse de bonheur*. But this pleasure may consist for the egoist, if he is an artist, in the fact that consciously he makes light of all aesthetic rules, so as to wound the sense of beauty by what is unaesthetic, ugly and base. Thus personal caprice and anarchy are also introduced into the realm of art.

In Nietzsche's opinion the fundamental and primitive instinct of man is the "instinct of freedom," that is, the impulse to attain unlimited freedom to do whatever one pleases. He also calls it the "will to power," namely, the executioner's feeling of power over his victim—the boundless, brutal selfishness that can only be satisfied to the full by another being's cruel, agonizing death. The more vividly the executioner realizes the torments, terror, and anguish of his victim, the more intensely will he, by contrast, sense the enjoyment of his own life. If this impulse, the "will to power," is forcibly suppressed, it will turn inward. In this case a man will seek to satisfy his irresistible impulse to cruelty by treating himself cruelly, by torturing his own mind and that is, in Nietzsche's opinion, what we call a bad conscience. So the bad conscience is only the result of outward restraint, and hence is something contrary to nature, something morbid. Nietzsche believes that it arose at a time when a section of humanity was forcibly brought under the yoke and pressed into a political organisation within which it was no longer possible for men outwardly to give full play to "their awful joy and intense delight in all destruction, in all the ecstasies of victory and cruelty."[1]

Nietzsche's explanation of the origin of bad conscience as due to the impulse towards cruelty and destruction being driven inward, affords the best proof of the fact that his fixed idea of the "transvaluation of all values," of the necessary rejections of all disinterested stirrings in the human heart, sprang from mental derangement. For when morbid, criminal impulses are present, their non-satisfaction produces pain and torment. To the morally weak-minded man, both the outer force that restrains his morbid caprice, and the inner resistance of the inherited and acquired moral instincts to the satisfaction of the delight in destruction, appear as acts of cruelty. The mentally disordered antisopher then, unless he chooses the violent release by suicide, seeks to escape from this painful inner discord of the

1. *Geneology of Morals.*

heart, by endeavouring to weaken innate moral and social instincts and to render them contemptible to himself, as though they were based only on cowardly weakness and mere imagination.

"The good ones," says Nietzsche, "are those who enjoy their freedom from all social control, for in the wilderness they can give vent with impunity to that tension which is produced by enclosure and imprisonment in the peace of society. They revert to the innocence of the beast-of-prey conscience, like jubilant monsters, who perhaps come from a ghastly bout of murder, rape, and torture, with bravado and a moral equanimity, as though merely some wild student's prank had been played, perfectly convinced that the poets have now a thing to sing and celebrate. It is impossible not to recognize at the core of all these aristocratic races the beast of prey ; the magnificent *blonde brute*, avidly rampant for spoil and victory ; this hidden core needed an outlet from time to time, the beast must get loose again, must return into the wilderness."[1]

Nietzsche generalizes his own inner experience, and, though it is founded on mental disturbance, presents it as the normal condition of man. For inner torment as the result of the non-satisfaction of particular impulses, in this case of inhuman, destructive impulses, can only be felt when these impulses have been set free from their latent condition and have developed their full strength. A disposition to selfish destructive impulses is indeed present in the heart of everyone ; but the greater one's mental sanity, and the harmony of one's psychic functions, the less will be the importance of the disorganizing impulses, and the more will they have the character of mere rudiments, feeble remnants. The energy they still possess will be so slight that their non-realization will excite either a scarcely perceptible degree of dissatisfaction or none at all.

The narrowness of Nietzsche's explanation of a bad conscience is plainly evident here : for if the impulse of cruelty is fundamental in man, and if it operated either in an outward or inward direction, it would be hard to conceive how this primary impulse towards cruelty, the "instinct of freedom" or "will to power," could at the same time be effective in both directions, that is, how cruelty venting itself outwardly, could at the same time turn inward against the person himself in the bad conscience.

All disinterestedness cannot be self-denial, self-abasement, and self-tyranny ; nor is it cruelty turned inward. When a man performs a disinterested act, that is, when he behaves justly or affectionately towards his neighbour, and does so willingly and joyfully, this moral action is based on a natural impulse, on a social instinct which, when it is satisfied and attains its object, produces pleasure or alleviation by a removal of the tension.

1. *Geneology of Morals.*

"Man is a social animal," so Darwin said. "The more enduring social instincts conquer the less persistent instincts." It all depends on the nature of the object to which man's mind is directed ; for whether it be something good or something bad its attainment will always cause pleasure, its non-attainment will cause pain. Therefore the man gifted with strong social, productive impulses is not, as Nietzsche thinks, a weakling or a "slave," nor is the man possessed of strong, destructive, selfish instincts the really superior ; but the reverse is the case. The amount of energy, indeed, may be as large in a good as in a bad man, only it is differently distributed in each with respect to the social and to the selfish impulses. In one man the total amount of energy may be concentrated in the social impulses, in another in the selfish ones. In the former case the result is a man of the highest excellence, in the latter a brute, a monster. "A man who possessed no trace of such social feelings," says Darwin, "would be an unnatural monster." One man may, therefore, be strong in what is good, another in what is evil. The difference is only this, that in the course of his development, the man endowed with social impulses will preserve his existence, but the brutal man will perish. The stronger the social instinct the greater will be the happiness caused by its satisfaction. The greater, therefore, a man's mental sanity and harmony, and the more his whole energy is centred in social, altruistic instincts, the more fully will he enjoy life, the less reason will he have for avoiding and hating others, and fleeing from and hating himself. Only he is cruel to himself who is cruel to others. Hence in all who are diseased is found, together with the lust of destruction directed outward, the impulse towards self-destruction. "The thought of suicide," says Nietzsche, "is a great consolation : by means of it one gets successfully through many a bad night."

Let us now consider what deductions Nietzsche draws from his conception of the origin of a bad conscience, constantly led as he is, by his instinctive aversion to society and to every disinterested devotion of the heart.

Justice, law and order in a state are, according to Nietzsche, things violently forced upon men, not things that have arisen in conformity with nature. He observes : "To talk of intrinsic right and intrinsic wrong is absolutely nonsensical ; intrinsically, an injury, an oppression, an exploitation can be nothing wrong, inasmuch as life is *essentially* something which functions by injuring . . . and is absolutely inconceivable without such a character." Such is the origin of the State : "a herd of blonde beasts of prey, a race of conquerors and masters, which with all its warlike organization and all its organizing power pounces with its terrible claws on a population, in numbers possibly tremendously superior, but as yet formless,

as yet nomad." The fact that the conquerors, although wild beasts abroad, yet within their political organization showed consideration for one another, and did not simply rend one another and their slaves to pieces, evidently implies, that they had already fallen away from their superior brutal nature which, in its purest ideal form, suffers subjection to no sort of restraint, and knows no limit to its extravagent "instinct of freedom" or to its dreadful "will to power."

This falling away from the true and ideal brutal nature was bound to revenge itself, and the process was as follows : The slaves, who were no longer able to manifest their savage cruelty outwardly, made a virtue of necessity. In order to avoid sinking into utter despair at the loss of their freedom, and in order to revenge themselves in an intellectual way, they persuaded themselves that what they had lost was not a true, but a deceptive freedom, and endeavoured to instil this lie into the minds of their masters. The true freedom, the "slaves" asserted, is the inner freedom from all passion and brutal instincts. Thus they lied away their misery, and at the same time took a "clever revenge" on their oppressors by endeavouring to cast contempt on the "master's" acts. The former ideal of the slaves, namely, a boundless caprice, was replaced by the ideal of disinterested love, of complete devotion of the heart to an act (goodness), or to a thought (truth), or to an impression (beauty). Thus arose "the ascetic ideal of the Christian religion." This patient, meek and just spirit is, in its cold and unprejudiced interpretation, nothing more than "once for all the weak are weak ; it is good to do *nothing for which we are not strong enough.*"

Yet the corruption, the falling away from that natural animal instinct, was transmitted from the slaves to the masters. Indeed, these also, had fallen from their true ideals, for they showed consideration towards one another and towards their slaves, behaving not at all like wild beasts, but like domesticated animals. The consequence was that the masters too degenerated—they became humane—and neglected the "beast of prey" among themselves. So finally the "slaves" obtained the chief authority in the domain of intellect. The "morality of slaves" (the morality of humanity) triumphed over the "morality of masters"—the morality of criminals and brutes.

The morality of the "slaves"—the morality of the weak and the wretched—had found its perfect development, according to Nietzsche, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, "the incarnate gospel of love." And so the fictitious "ascetic ideal" became the guide of civilization, and the "blonde brute" grew constantly more tame and altruistic, and the superior, bestial ideals were abandoned with unmerited contempt.

Although provisionally the "revolt of the slaves in the sphere of morals" seems to have conquered, yet Nietzsche hopes for a new reversal of things, for an Anti-Christ, for a new world, in which the original condition of boundless caprice and brutally wild freedom will be re-established. Then there will no longer be a bad conscience, for people will trample a fellow-being like a worm ; so conscience will be remodelled. "Man has far too long regarded," says Nietzsche, "his natural proclivities with an evil eye, so that eventually they have become in his system affiliated to a bad conscience."[1]

Disinterested love is a negation of life and means the "great nausea," the will to nothingness and nihilism. For according to Nietzsche's idea, he who loves disinterestedly, does not really live in himself, in his own person ; he rather despises his own life, while delighting only in the fact that another lives and enjoys. He who loves another with all his heart renounces his own existence. The more he loves the other, the more will he be ready to lay down his life for the person he loves. Man lessens his own value when he considers another great, unless he honours in him the brute, the devilish superman.

Now, it would appear that Nietzsche recognizes a consideration towards one's neighbours, namely, for one's equals. His ideal of society seems to be an aristocracy, the members of which, it is true, behave like brutes to those outside it, but who esteem one another. As soon, however, as the pressure from outside relaxes, and outward danger ceases to threaten, the brutes turn upon one another. "Herds" are formed only by the weak ; the "blonde brutes" hold together only by the iron force of necessity.

When Nietzsche speaks in terms of praise of a ruling caste, he does not consider this aristocratic organization a permanent one, but as a transitional state leading to that "*war of all against all.*" When society is dissolved, when everything falls into universal ruin and becomes an orgy, the modern antisopher exults : in high-sounding words he praises the glorious spectacle that will be presented when the society of men explodes and perishes like gigantic fireworks.

There is admirable consistency in Nietzsche's negation of all truth. Not only is moral truth denied by him, but also scientific and aesthetic truth. For if a knowledge and observance of moral truth requires disinterestedness, detachment from the narrowness of one's own person, an entering into the thoughts, feelings, and efforts of others, into their hearts

1. *Geneology of Morals.*

and minds, a conception of scientific truth no less requires disinterestedness. In order to be objective, to ascertain any fact with scientific fidelity and exactitude, the mind must possess the same inner repose and freedom from bias as in the case of a moral action. Vain and selfish men will always be bad testifiers of scientific truth. Of what concern can scientific truth be to him who raises selfishness to a principle of life, who finds the truth of life in the narrowness of his individuality ? Selfishness is opposed to every kind of truth.

In the complete isolation of the individual Nietzsche sees the ideal condition of human existence. As soon as men grow sensible, and recognise their position in the universe, they will be ready to abandon the boundless assertion of their paltry personality and curb their bestiality. By this they renounce life ; and so away with all scientific truth ! "Has there not been since the time of Copernicus," declares Nietzsche, "an unbroken progress in the self-belittling of man and his *will* for belittling himself ? . . . Since Copernicus . . . man rolls . . . *into the thrilling sensation of his own nothingness.*"[1]

The selfish man can as little receive an impression through his senses or through his imagination without personal interest, as he can act or think without personal interest. If, therefore, a self-limited individuality is to admit an impression, it must contain "a promise of happiness." Hence Nietzsche asserts the personally limited standpoint, not only in thought and act, but in sensation as well. He teaches the "Transvaluation of all values," and turns everything upside down, sees precisely in what is usually called base and vulgar, the truly "aristocratic" and noble. Nothing (that does not promise a satisfaction of selfishness) is beautiful. An enthusiastic adherent of Nietzsche's once told me that he intended to produce a system of ethics in which the idea of morality should no longer find a place. It is to be hoped that, when he completes his work, he will next attempt the task of producing a system of aesthetics in which the idea of the beautiful finds no place.

The selfish man who views everything from his personally limited standpoint, will be most easily hurt since he applies everything to himself. "The most wretched lives are led by those," says Professor Broad in his essay on Butler, "who have nothing to do but think of their own happiness and scheme for it."[2] Indeed, the more disinterested a man is, the more he be superior to fate, beyond good and evil, and in a condition of freedom.

What strikes one as specially remarkable in the case of Nietzsche is

1, *Geneology of Morals.*
2. *Five Types of Ethical Theory.*

his double life, the inner discord in him which leads him from a simple desire to live free from the restraint of "law and order" to the most poisonous revilings of that which, whether outwardly or inwardly, appears to be a bar to the unrestrained assertion of personal caprice. When this inner discord has not assumed too decided a form, it may be perfectly reconciled with the fact that a man can outwardly lead an ordinary life, if only the fancy remains that, whenever he chooses, he may also renounce all the advantages of such an orderly life and play the murdering Viking. Yet, after all, it is better to renounce the dangers of the "wilderness," while persuading oneself that this renunciation is of one's own free will, and that, therefore, one might just as well have acted otherwise. Thus one enjoys the advantages of a well-ordered life, and at the same time has the proud consciousness of being a dangerous "blonde Teuton beast." Therefore, people whose social instincts and feelings have become partially morbid, but who in other respects have preserved their full power of reflection, do not as a rule proceed to really perverse actions. But the stronger the morbid impulses grow, the more ideal will appear to such a sufferer a condition in which he can give full rein to these perverse impulses. Hence Nietzsche's great admiration for a Caesar Borgia, one of the "healthiest of all tropical monsters."

The mental process may most clearly be made intelligible by reference to a bodily one. A healthy person, after a time of repose, finds it child's play to overcome gravitation, the force by which every atom of his body is drawn towards the centre of the earth. But when the muscles are exhausted by protracted and excessive exertions, their strength may just suffice to overcome the force of gravitation and to keep the body erect. Only extreme necessity can ultimately deter a man, in a state of exhaustion, from yielding to the feeling of fatigue and casting himself on the ground. Something similar happens to a morally weak-minded man who still possesses a larger or smaller remnant of altruistic feelings and power of sensible reflection. Morally he keeps more or less perfectly erect, outwardly, perhaps, faultlessly so. But he derives no pleasure from this effort, and as a starving man dreams of luscious food, and a tired man longs for a spot where he may lie down and rest, so the morally weak-minded antisopher pines for freedom, from the outer and inner restraint of social impulses, for freedom from "the ascetic ideal."

In conclusion, a brief explanation of how it was possible for this antisophy to attain to such consideration may be useful. In our nature there are present impulses, to good and evil, a striving after the perfect ; and on the other hand a lack of appreciation of what is good and noble. The generality of mankind is a mixture of genius and narrow-mindedness. Now, as the good, the divine in us is satisfied by all that is perfect, beautiful and

elevated, so also all that is base, ugly and perverse finds an echo within us. It is a well-known fact that a large number of psychiatrists became insane themselves purely as the result of a kind of mental infection. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at that the preachings of narrow selfishness frequently enough fall on fertile soil, that the seed springs up, and that a person quite sensible in other respects is suddenly inspired with an enthusiasm for the productions of megalomania and concealed moral weakness of mind.

Ultimately the productions of a time of discord and ferment fall again into oblivion, but moral, intellectual and aesthetic narrowness can never be quite expelled from the human heart ; for we are men, imperfect beings at variance with ourselves. Only too often do our base instincts conquer us ; the better element lives in us merely as a desire, a longing, an idea, and we are easily disconcerted by being called idealists and dreamers.

THE OUTCAST*

Rabindranath Tagore

THEY are turned away from the temple-gates
by the traffickers in religion.
They are the uninitiates,
—the outcasts.
They seek their God in His own rightful place,
beyond the barriers of artifice,
they seek Him in the light of inner faith,
in the midst of star-spangled heavens,
in forests strewn with flowers,
and in the hidden pain
of love and parting.
Not for them is the image of the deity
soiled by human hands,
imprisoned within the temple walls.

By the side of the Padma,
whose angry waves sweep away
many an age-old temple,
have I seen one of them,
pursuing his lonesome way,
his *ektara*† in hand——
seen him on his journey
to seek the soul's mate
through mystic ways of song.
I am one of them
—the uninitiate, the outcast,
whose offerings reach not
the prison where God is.

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* Translated from the original Bengali by Khitish Roy and approved by the author.—*Ed.*

† A one-stringed musical instrument of the wandering folk-singers.

Asks the priest,
'Didst see thy God ?'
'No'—say I.
Surprised he asks,
'Knowest not the way ?'
'No',—say I.
He questions in dismay,
'Art thou not of caste then ?'
'No'—say I.

Even as a boy
I have felt in my blood the stream of radiance
that flows from the spring of primal light.
I have spread my questioning spirit
upon the bosom of the Eternal
and have marvelled,
how for millions of years
that bright spark lay hidden
until it burst into a flame
that was I.
This perpetual wonder
has in itself been for me
a joyful ritual every day,
my untutored worship
beyond the temple gates ;
for I am the uninitiate—the outcast.

Born in the despised household
of the social exile,
I was rejected by the respectable.
Out of grace with playmates,
a nameless stranger
to the neighbourhood,
I could but peep across
their bristling hedge of hate,
at their house
well established in sanctimonious pride.
And I watched from a distance
the crowds pouring in
carefully walking along the beaten tracks.
Away from the crowd,

I pursued my lonely fancies
at the crossing of the roads.
They plucked for their God's worship
flowers prescribed by their scripture
and left for me and my God
the whole garden of blossoms of all the climes
approved and blessed by the Sun.
Into the open arms of Man
was I thus thrust
by the contempt of the pious.
And I found my lonely mates
whose light and voice and prowess
have made epochs in history.
The heroes, the sages,
who have made death divine,
they are my familiars :
They are the seekers after truth,
worshippers of light
and inheritors of endless life.
I have prayed with folded hands :
Deliver us,
O man of men, O man of all times,
from this creed of contempt
which proudly flaunts
the unholy mark of exclusion,
rescue me from the endless boredom
of their unmeaning observances
that insult humanity.
Blessed am I
that I have known you
at the purest height of the freedom
where I claim the fellowship
of the sons of the immortal,
—even I, who am the uninitiate—the outcast.

I am the uninitiate, the outcast,
My offerings are
to the celestial as to the human,
to the bright being in the heavens,
and to the inner man in me and outside myself,
whose love is joy for ever.

ON THE WAY TO JAPAN

(*Continued*[1])

Rabindranath Tagore

VI

10th May, 1916.

TOWARDS afternoon we entered the harbour of Penang. Mukul,[2] who was with us, exclaimed : "So this is Penang ! How we were done to death in school, learning by heart—Penang, Singapore, Hong Kong !" It amuses me to think that we have no more difficulty in seeing Penang now than we had in seeing it on the school map. Only then the master used to show us countries by going over the map with his finger, and now they are shown by going over with a ship.

There is very little "reality" in this kind of travelling. It is just sitting and dreaming. Many men have had to travel much and dare much in order to discover these lands, to preserve their routes, to make the roads fit by land and water; we are enjoying the bottled preserve, as it were, of all that travel and adventure. No thorns, no peels, no stones, only the pulp, with as much sugar as possible thrown in. Every now and again the boundless sea keeps heaving, the curtain keeps rising at each daybreak, a vast sight of inaccessibility is held up before our eyes ; yet we feel amused, as if we are looking at the caged lion at Alipur.[3] The terrible becomes merely attractive.

Our ship arrived at the port of Penang just as the sun was going down. The world seemed suddenly to have grown beautiful. The earth embraced the sea with both arms outstretched. The tender light that fell through the clouds upon the bluish hills was like a transparent golden veil ; whether it hid the face of the bride or disclosed it, was difficult to say. A divine orchestra composed of sea and sky and land was playing from the golden gateway of evening.

There are very few things made by man more beautiful to look at than boats putting out to sea with sails outspread. Where man has been

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1. For the first part of the travel-diary see the last issue of the *Visva-Bharati Quarterly*. For the present English translation we are indebted to Indira Devi Choudhurani.—*Ed.*

2. Mr. Mukul Dey, now Principal of the Government School of Art, Calcutta.

3. The Calcutta Zoo is situated in Alipur.

obliged to keep pace with nature's rhythm, there his creations are bound to be beautiful. The boat, having had to make truce with wind and water, has gained their gift of grace. Where the machine is able to despise nature by its own strength, there its arrogance emboldens man to make his works shamelessly ugly. The steamship is more convenient than the sailing vessel, but it has very little beauty. As our ship slowly sailed up to port, and the ambitious projects of man began to loom larger than nature, and the factory chimneys kept drawing their straight lines across nature's curves,—then I could see what an amount of ugliness had been created in the world through man's passions. On shore after shore, and port after port, man's greed mocks at heaven with hideous gestures.

VII

14th May, 1916.

The sky above, the sea below. By day and night this is the only ration allowed our eyes.

It is because we cling to the lap of mother-earth that we don't give a glance to the sky, that we call its airclothing nakedness. When we have to remain face to face with that sky for any length of time, we are struck with its wonderful variety. There cloud upon cloud unfolds itself in irrelevant forms and colours. It is like improvising a song,—undefined modes of form and colour are being chanted, in which there is no time, no strict canons of construction, no words with any meaning, only the free play of musical notes, accompanied by the fairy-dance of the sea with its free rhythm. The beats that are played on its drum are of such a vast metre that we cannot grasp its measure. It has the exhilaration but not the limitations of dancing.

Our powers of observing the play of sea and sky on this immense stage gradually increase. Everything that is great on earth is surrounded by spaciousness, and has a simple background. It does not require any extraneous help to show itself. The starlit assembly of the night reveals itself in the midst of infinite darkness.

We are fortunate in not having anything else before us. On other occasions, when I have crossed the seas in English passenger-boats, the passengers themselves were a sight to see. They used to veil the infinite with their dance and song and games and excitement. They didn't want to leave even a minute unemployed. Moreover, there were the accessories of dressing and etiquette. Here there is no competition between the deck of the ship and the seascape. The passengers are few in number,—only the four of us ; the other two or three are quiet people. Then we sleep and wake and eat in negligent fashion, and nobody minds ; chiefly because

there is no lady present to whom our slovenliness might appear as disrespect. Hence we are able to realise day after day, that sunrise and sunset are no trifling matters in this world, that heaven and earth combine to give them a royal reception.

We see the clouds rising to the sky from the horizon in various convolutions, as if the form-fountains in the creator's courtyard had been set playing. There is hardly any substance, only form, an endless variety of forms,—only there is no straight line. The straight line belongs to man's handiwork. In the walls of his room, the chimneys of his factory, the triumphal column of man stands perfectly straight. The curve is the line of life, man cannot manipulate it with ease. The straight line is the line of matter, it easily yields to man's discipline ; it bears man's burdens, and submits to his tyranny.

VIII

I have heard that when the Shah of Persia went to England, he told Englishmen, *a propos* of eating with one's fingers, that by using knives and forks, they miss one of the pleasures of eating. Those who marry through the agency of matchmakers lose the joys of courtship. It is through the touch of the hands that the wooing of food commences. Taste begins at the finger-ends.

Similarly, my taste of Japan has begun with a Japanese steamer. If I had gone to Japan in a French boat, my acquaintance would not have started from the finger-ends. I have gone on many a voyage before in English boats, but there is a vast difference between those ships and this one. The captains of those steamers were unmitigated captains. I do not remember a single captain of them all, because they were only parts of the ship. It was only through their guiding of the vessel that we came into touch with them.

Perhaps if I had been a European, it wouldn't have been difficult for me to feel that they were something more than mere captains, that they were men. But I am a foreigner in this boat too,—I am just the same to a Japanese, as I am to a European. Ever since putting foot on this steamer I have noticed that our captain's captainhood is not at all obtrusive, he is an altogether natural man. He maintains a certain official connection and distance with his subordinates, but not in the least with the passengers. In the midst of the fiercest storm and wind I have been to his room, and seen him perfectly at ease. We have struck up an intimacy of talking and dealing with him, not as a captain, but as a man. This voyage of ours will come to an end, the boardship connection between ourselves and him will be dissolved, yet we shall remember him.

Our ship's accountant came to me one day and said : "Many questions

arise in my mind, which I should like to thresh out with you ; but I know so little English that it would not be possible for me to discuss anything by word of mouth. If you don't mind, I shall bring you written questions now and then which you can answer in writing at your leisure."

Since then, questions and answers have been passing between us on the relation between the state and society. I cannot imagine that the purser of any other ship would bother his head over such questions, or create such unnecessary trouble in the midst of his own work.

One other thing too I particularly noticed. Mukul is a mere boy, a deck-passenger. But the ship's officers are freely making friends with him. How to steer a ship, how to guide its course at sea, how to observe the stars,—they explain all this to him as they work. They talk to him about their own business and hopes and expectations. Mukul had a fancy to see the working of the ship's engine, so last night at 11 o'clock they took him down to the nether regions of the steamer, and showed him everything for a whole hour.

To maintain a family relationship with man even in connection with work,—perhaps this is something specially Eastern. The West keeps work so very rigidly apart, that the claims of human relations dare not approach it. This makes for great efficiency in work, no doubt. Since Japan has been initiated into work by Europe, I had thought her working limits would also be very well defined. But in this Japanese boat I see only work, and not its strict limitations. I feel as if I am at home, and not on the company's steamer. Yet there is no remissness in the washing and cleaning and the daily routine of the steamer.

In the East relationship between man and man is deep and varied. Our ties are not broken even with those of our forebears who are dead. The net of our family connections is cast far and wide. Even our servants claim a family connection with us, not only their wages. That is why our nature suffers where we cannot lay any such claim, where work is excessively strict. Very often the misunderstanding that takes place between the English master and the Bengali employee is due to this fact, that the former cannot recognise the claims of the latter, and the latter cannot appreciate the stern business discipline of the former. The Bengali employee, through force of old-established habit, expects that the manager of the works will be not only a manager but something of a parent as well ; when he is disappointed he feels astonished, and cannot help inwardly blaming his employer. The Englishman is accustomed to acknowledge the claims of work, the Bengali is accustomed to acknowledge the claims of man,—hence both parties fail to come to a reasonable agreement.

Yet one cannot help feeling that there must needs be a reconcilement

and not an estrangement between business claims and human claims. How the two can be harmoniously combined cannot be fixed from outside by any hard-and-fast rule. Real harmony is evolved from within one's nature. In our country it is difficult to bring about this natural inward adjustment, because we are obliged to carry on work according to the rules laid down by those who manage our business.

In Japan the Eastern mind has learnt business methods from the West, but they themselves manage their own business. Hence one cannot but cherish a hope that in Japan a reconciliation may yet take place between Western and Eastern feeling. In the first stages of education when the tendency of imitation is very strong, the pupil's zeal for the letter of the law is greater than his master's, but the inner mentality slowly performs its own task, and, by dissolving the hard elements of learning in its own gastric juices, quietly assimilates it. This process of assimilation is a somewhat lengthy one. Therefore the time has not yet come for us to see clearly what form the learning of the West will assume in Japan. Possibly we shall now see a good many incongruities between East and West which are ugly to look at. We see the same in our country too at every step. But it is the duty of nature to reconcile these incongruities.

IX

17th May, 1916.

Our steamer touched Singapore on May 14th. Our young English friend Pearson and Mukul went down to see the city. The ship was drawn up close alongside the quay. There is no uglier nightmare on earth than a ship's quay, and on top of it the sky became overcast with the threat of rain. They began loading and unloading the freight with a hideous noise. Being a lazily-disposed person, I could not gird up my loins to go out and see the city. In the midst of that cyclone of fearful clamour, I sat on deck and began to write, in order to preserve my peace of mind.

Shortly afterwards the captain announced that a Japanese lady had come to see me. She offered to take me round the city. The ceaseless clatter of loading those sacks was then grinding my mind like a millstone, so I hardly needed much persuasion. I went in that lady's car and had a long ride past the city, through rubber plantations. The ground was undulating, the grass deep green, and a muddy stream rushed alongside the road, turning and twisting and making a gurgling sound, with stacks of cut-cane soaking in it here and there. The passers-by were mostly Chinamen.

When the car entered the city, the lady took me to her shop of Japanese bric-à-brac. It was then nearly dusk and I thought to myself that it was about time for our evening meal on boardship ; but the recollec-

tion of those sacks heaving on that storm of noise made the idea of returning there repugnant to me. When therefore the lady gently said that she would like to invite me and my English companion to dinner at a hotel, if we had no objection, we readily accepted. At about ten in the evening she reached us to the steamer and took her leave.

The history of this lady is interesting. Her husband was a lawyer in Japan, but not a very successful one. It became increasingly difficult for them to make both ends meet. It was the wife who suggested to the husband to start some business. At first the husband was unwilling, arguing that as nobody in their family had ever been in trade, it was beneath their dignity. But at last he yielded to his wife's persuasion, and they both came over to Singapore and started a shop. That was eighteen years ago. All their friends and relatives were unanimous in prophesying an early bankruptcy. But by dint of this woman's industry, skill and fair dealing with customers the business gradually prospered. Last year her husband died, and now she has to manage everything alone. Practically the whole business has been built up by her.

In our country several cases may be cited where the husband has brought ruin on the home, but after his death the wife has saved and put everything in order. I am told that the women of France too have given proofs of their business capacity. Work that does not require inventive genius, work that above all requires deftness, industry and dealing with others, seems to suit woman's capacity.

Our steamer left port on the morning of the 15th May. Just at the moment of departure a cat fell into the sea. Then all haste was suspended, and saving the cat became the most important thing to do. It was fished out from the water by diverse clever ways and means, and then the ship put out. This delayed our departure beyond the appointed time, but it was a source of great delight to me.

X

Our days are drifting across the sea like sailing boats. Those boats do not intend to make for any pier, they carry no freight. They are only out for exchanging embraces with the waves and the winds and the sky. Man's society is the rival of man's universe. After settling all social claims we have no time to accept the invitation of the universe. As the moon keeps one face turned to the sun, and the other face remains in darkness, so the immense attraction of society causes all the light of man's consciousness to play on that side, and we have almost forgotten the other wise : how much the universe means to man, rarely, if ever, enters into our calculations.

When we ignore the truth on one side, not only do we suffer loss on

that side, but we become losers in all directions. In proportion as man leaves out the universe, do his sin and sorrow increase. It is for this reason that every now and again man is drawn to the opposite extreme. He says : in detachment lies hope ; asceticism is free from all fear. The world is a prison, he cries, and rushes to seek salvation and peace in the secluded forests or the far-off mountains. It is just because man has separated society from the universe that, in order to draw the breath of life freely, he has to renounce society and has had to make the preposterous pronouncement that the way of man's salvation lies far away from man.

When we live in the world, we dread leisure. Because society is a solid entity, any opening in it means vacancy. It is in order to stop this gap somehow that we must have wine and cards and gambling and king-making and the overthrowing of ministries ;—otherwise we cannot kill time. That is, we do not want time itself, we want to do without it.

Yet leisure is the throne sublime. The universe is established in the midst of infinite leisure. Where there is greatness, there leisure is not hollow, it is completely full. It is in society, whence we have banished greatness that leisure is so empty ; in the universe where the sublime dwells, that leisure is so deeply beautiful. As man feels ashamed without any clothes on, so in the world leisure puts us to shame, because as it seems empty we call it dullness and slowness. It's like the difference between an essay and a song. Where the written word comes to an end in the essay, there is nothing else. But where the words of the song stop, the pause is filled with music. As a matter of fact, the larger the melody, the more pauses must there be in between. The singer's mission is fulfilled by unheard words, that of the writer by hoards of words !

In the world, there is the crowd of the needful on the one hand, and the crowd of the unnecessary on the other. We are bound to shoulder the responsibility of the needful : we may not escape that, just as one cannot do without walls, if one has to live in a house. But a house is not all walls. There are at least some openings for windows, through which we keep up our connection with the sky. But I find in the world that people cannot bear even a few windows. It is to fill up those small openings that all the unnecessaries of the world have been created. All sorts of trivialities are nailed across those windows, so as to block them completely. Like the husk of the cocoanut, these unnecessary trifles constitute the greater part. Indoors and outdoors, at home and abroad, in religion and work, in every direction they command the highest prerogatives : it is their business to stop gaps.

Beginning from the jetty at Kidderpur and up to this quay of Hong-kong, I have been observing the appearance of trade at every port. How huge

it is cannot be realised unless seen like this with one's own eyes. It is like the hunter's meal described by our Poet *Kavikankan*—who swallowed big chunks at every mouthful, whose feeding was as horrible as its noise was disgusting. This hunter Trade is also breathlessly devouring huge quantities which it frightens one to look at,—without pause, and with what an amount of noise ! It carries things to its mouth with iron hands, it chews with iron teeth, it digests with its iron stomach where the fire of hunger is kept ever alight, and it circulates the golden blood-current through its iron veins and nerves to every part of its world-wide body. It looks like an animal, like those monsters that once sprawled over the earth. There is nothing at all about it that may be called grace of form. Its skin is terribly thick, and wherever its paw falls, there the tender green skin of earth peels off and the bones show underneath.

Not only does it devour pawfuls of things, but it devours human beings as readily :—man, woman or child, is all the same to it.

But those primeval monsters did not last. And a day may come when archaeologists will discover the iron skeletons of this modern monster in the stratum of our age, and will wonder at the strange disproportion of its limbs.

The fitness of man in the animal kingdom is not due to the bulkiness of his body. Man's skin is soft, his physical strength small, and his senses are perhaps less acute than those of the lower animals. But he is the possessor of a force which cannot be seen, which occupies no space, which does not depend on any place, yet spreads its power over the whole universe. The physical sphere of man has passed from the visible universe to the invisible, and there become powerful. The Bible says, *the meek shall inherit the earth*, which means that the strength of meekness is inward, not outward ; the less it strikes the more it wins ; it does not fight on the battle-field, but gains the victory by making peace with the universal forces in the invisible sphere.

The trade monster too must one day put a stop to its demoniac career and become human ! Today of all human institutions in the world the ugliest is this institution of trade, which wearies the world with its weight, deafens the world with its noise, soils the world with its refuse, and lacerates the world with its greed. This world-wide unloveliness, this revolt against sight, sound, taste, touch, smell and the heart of man, this signing a bond of slavery to Greed raised to the royal throne of the universe,—how long will man, frantic with cupidity, go on playing this gamble, with himself for stake ? A game in which man goes on losing himself cannot go on for ever.

21st May, 1916.

The sky is overcast with clouds, the hills in the harbour of

Hongkong can be seen, with waterfalls coursing down their sides. It seems as if a party of giants, after putting their heads into the sea, have just raised them above the water, which is trickling down their tangled hair and beards. Charlie* says that the scenery is like that of a Scottish lake surrounded by hills,—the same green dumpy hills, the same clouds like wet blankets, the same land- and sea-scape partially blurred by mist.

Our ship will stop here for about two days. The idea of going down to the city and staying in a hotel for the two days didn't appeal to me. For a man of my lazy disposition rest is better than comfort ; happiness has its drawbacks, but peace is without sin. I remained on board, even at the risk of enduring the disturbance of loading and unloading. And I was not without my reward.

First of all, I noticed the work of the Chinese labourers on the quay. They wore only blue pyjamas leaving the rest of the body bare. Their bodies were spare and perfectly moulded : not the slightest superfluity anywhere. All the muscles of the body kept rippling to the beat of their work. There was no necessity of prodding them from outside. Work seemed to vibrate from their bodies like music from lutes. I could never have imagined that I could possibly extract so much enjoyment from the loading and unloading of cargo on a ship's pier. The work of perfect strength is very beautiful, at each stroke it beautifies the body and that body too beautifies the work. The poetry of toil and the rhythm of man's body appeared before me here in extenso. This I can say with emphasis, that no woman's figure could be more beautiful than these men's figures, because such perfect balance between strength and grace is rarely found in women. In another steamer just opposite ours, all the Chinese sailors, after their work was over, were bathing in the afternoon with their clothes off, and it was a joy to watch them.

Seeing such strength, skill and joy of work thus concentrated in one place, I realised what an amount of power is being stored throughout the land in this great nation. When such an immense power gets its own modern vehicle, i. e. when science comes under its control, what power on earth will be able to offer it resistance ? Then to its genius for work will be added the materials to work with. All the nations that are now enjoying the fruits of the earth, dread that awakening of China, and want to put off that day unwelcome for them.

XI

May 28th, 1916.

Today our ship will enter the harbour of Kobe. For the last few

* Mr. C. F. Andrews.

days it has been raining incessantly. Now and again the small Japanese islands raise their hills to the sky beckoning the voyagers, but everything is blurred with rain and mist ; those islands look as if a severe cold has muffled their voice. I am dragging my chair from one end of the deck to the other to escape the onslaught of the damp wind.

There are several Indian merchants in Kobe, with a sprinkling of Bengalis. Immediately upon arriving at the Port of Hongkong, I had received a wire from these Indians, to say that they had arranged for my reception. They came and laid hold of me on board. On the other hand, Taikwan, the famous painter of Japan, was there. He had stayed with us when he was in India. We met Katsuta, too, another painter-friend of ours. Sano was also there : at one time he had been a teacher of jiu-jitsu in our school at Santiniketan. The Japanese friends desired me to go to their house, but I had already accepted the invitation of the Indians. This created an awful dilemma. Neither side would give way. Argument and heated discussion continued. On top of it came the battalion of the newspaper reporters. The drawback of fame is that we cannot get off by accepting only as much of it as we think necessary, but must take a great deal more ; the burden of that extra load is hard indeed to bear.

I have taken refuge in the house of Morarjee, one of the first Gujrati merchants here. Those newspaper men have followed me here too. This journalistic froth is an outcome of the new wine Japan has imbibed. This thing is merely the air of words breaking into bubbles,—nobody really wants it or enjoys it,—it only fills the head of the wine-cup with emptiness, and displays the picture of intoxication before one's eyes.

However, yesterday evening passed at Morarji's in talking and eating and receiving hospitality. What strikes the eye of a newcomer in this household most is the Japanese maid-servant. She wears her hair in a puffed *chignon*, her cheeks are puffy, her eyes are small, her nose is slightly wanting, her dress is pretty, and there are grass slippers on her feet ; there is a great discrepancy here with beauty as described by the poets of other lands and yet on the whole one likes the look of it ; as if it were something compact of a human being and a doll, of flesh and wax ; withal a body instinct with quickness, skill and strength.

Why doesn't Japan strike us as being something specially new and strange here, as it used to do when we read books and saw pictures at home ?—Mukul asked me. Beginning from Rangoon, and passing through Singapore and Hongkong, the mind's special resources for seeing the new become gradually exhausted. When the little hills begin peeping boldly out from one corner and another of foreign seas, then we say—Charming ! Then

Mukul says, it would be great fun to get down and stay there ! He thinks this excitement of seeing the new for the first time is going to last forever. Then, when by degrees the uncommon became the common and almost every moment our ship sighted an island, the field-glasses lay uncared for on the table, and the mind responded no longer. When the things to be seen increase in number, seeing itself grows less. The appetite for the new decreases by feeding on the new.

Another disadvantage is, that all civilized nations of the earth have been cast into the same modern mould, and come out with the same features, or want of features. Sitting at my window and looking out upon Kobe, what I see is an iron Japan. It is as if the awful dragon, the Chinese paint in their pictures, had swallowed the earth with its huge twisted body. The serried ranks of iron roofs were glittering in the sun like the scales of its back. Very hard and very ugly is this demon called necessity. Looking at this city of Kobe, I realise that man's necessity has turned all nature's variety into one uniformity. The axiom that man has needs, has grown and grown and kept opening its maw wider and wider until it has devoured most of the world. Gradually even nature has become only an article of need and man only a man of need.

Since the day I left Calcutta, this is the thing that has loomed large in my eyes, at every port and in every country. It never struck me before so forcibly as now, how far man's material needs are overwhelming his finer sensibility. At one time man assigned a low rank to trade, and did not give honour to money-making. But nowadays the mere living has become so great an end in itself, that man dares not scorn his needs and the purveyors of those needs. He is not ashamed to judge the value of all his belongings by money. This is tending to change the nature of all men, most of whom feel not the slightest hesitation in selling themselves continually. Society has gradually so changed that money has been installed as the symbol of merit. Hence man who once knew how to scorn money for the sake of manhood, now scorns manhood for the sake of money.

I also notice that Japan is slowly departing from the dress of its people ; which means that Japan has given up the clothes of the home for the clothes of the office. Nowadays an office-land which is not any particular country has spread all over the world. And since modern Europe has created the office, its dress is that of modern Europe. In our country too the doctor says,—I need that hat and coat ; the lawyer and the merchant say the same thing. In this way the so-called necessity goes on increasing, until it rolls all the world into one ugly sameness.

That is why, on going out into the streets of Japan, the eye is chiefly attracted by the Japanese women. Then one realises that it is they who

are the home of Japan, the country of Japan. They are not of the office. I am told that Japanese women are not held in honour by Japanese men. I do not know whether this is true or not, but there is an honour which is not given from outside, but which belongs to one's inner self. It is the women of Japan who have taken it upon themselves to preserve the honour of Japan. They have not bowed down to need as being supreme, hence are they a source of delight to the eye and mind.

One thing strikes the eye. There are crowds of people in the streets, but no confusion whatsoever. It is as if these people do not know how to shout ; they say, even the children of Japan do not cry. On going through the street in a car, when one is sometimes held up by rickshaws, the chauffeur waits quietly, he never shouts or abuses anybody. In the middle of the road suddenly a bicycle very nearly collided with our car,—under which circumstances an Indian chauffeur could not have refrained from abusing the cyclist to his heart's content,—but our man took not the slightest notice. I am told by the Bengalis here, that even when there is injury, caused by collision between two vehicles in the streets, both parties, instead of shouting and abusing each other, brush the dust off and walk away.

It seems to me that this is the main source of Japan's strength. The Japanese does not waste his energy in useless screaming and quarrelling. And because there is no waste of energy, it is not found wanting when required. This calmness and fortitude of body and mind is part of their national self-realisation. They know how to control themselves in sorrow and tribulation, in excitement and pain ; they do not always allow themselves to melt and drip through every hole and opening. That is why foreigners say, the Japanese are inscrutable, they are too reserved.

This continual curtailment of one's self-expression is to be found in their verse also. Often a poem consists of no more than three lines. These three lines are sufficient for their poets and their readers. That is why I have never heard anyone singing in the streets since I have been here. The hearts of these people are not resonant like a waterfall, but silent like a lake. All the poems of theirs that I have hitherto heard are picture-poems, not song-poems. When the heart aches and burns, then life is spent ; the Japanese spend very little in this direction. Their inner self finds complete expression in their sense of beauty. The sense of beauty is independent of self-interest. We don't have to break our hearts over flowers and birds or the moon. Our only connection with them is the enjoyment of beauty,—they do not hurt us anywhere, or deprive us of anything ; our lives are in no wise maimed by them. That's why three lines are enough for them.

Two old Japanese poems will serve to illustrate my meaning :

Ancient pool,
Frogs leaping,
Splash of water.

Finished ! No more is necessary. The mind of the Japanese reader is all eyes. An ancient pool, dark, silent, deserted by man. As soon as a frog leaps into it, the sound is heard. That it is heard proves how silent the pool is. How the picture of this old pool must be sketched in the mind, only that much has been suggested by the poet,—anything more is altogether unnecessary.

Another poem :

Rotten bough,
A crow,
Autumn.

No more ! In autumn there are no leaves on the trees, one or two branches are rotting, on them sits a crow. In cold countries, autumn is the season of falling leaves, fading flowers and skies leaden-hued with mist ; this season brings to mind a sense of death. That a black crow is sitting on a rotten bough, this much is enough to call up before the mind's eye of the reader, all the emptiness and desolation of autumn. The poet only introduces the subject, then steps aside. The reason why he has to retire so quickly is because the Japanese reader's power of mental vision is great.

Here is another example of a poem, in which it seems to me that India and Japan have met.

Heaven and earth are flowers,
The gods and Buddha are flowers,
The heart of man is the soul of the flower.

Japan looks upon heaven and earth as full-blown flowers ; India says, these two flowers that have blossomed on the same stalk,—heaven and earth, gods and Buddha,—had there been no human heart, then this flowering would have been only an external thing ; the beauty of this Beautiful lies within the heart of man.

However that may be, not only is there brevity of wording in these poems, there is brevity of feeling also, which is not disturbed anywhere by the heart's emotion. It may be called the heart's economy. I think there is a deep significance of Japan in this.

(*to be continued.*)

POET TO POET

*(Full text of correspondence between Yone Noguchi and Rabindranath Tagore on the Sino-Japanese Conflict.)**

41 Sakurayama,
Nakano, Tokyo.
July 23rd,1938.

Dear Rabindranath,

When I visited you at Shantiniketan a few years ago, you were troubled with the Ethiopian question, and vehemently condemned Italy. Retiring into your guest chamber that night, I wondered whether you would say the same thing on Japan, if she were equally situated like Italy. I perfectly agreed with your opinion and admired your courage of speaking, when in Tokyo, 1916, you censured the westernization of Japan from a public platform. Not answering back to your words, the intellectual people of my country were conscious of its possible consequence, for, not only staying as an unpleasant spectacle, the westernization had every chance for becoming anything awful.

But if you take the present war in China for the criminal outcome of Japan's surrender to the West, you are wrong, because, not being a slaughtering madness, it is, I believe, the inevitable means, terrible it is though, for establishing a new great world in the Asiatic continent, where the "principle of live-and-let-live" has to be realized. Believe me, it is the war of "Asia for Asia." With a crusader's determination and with a sense of sacrifice that belongs to a martyr, our young soldiers go to the front. Their minds are light and happy, the war is not for conquest, but the correction of mistaken idea of China, I mean Kuomingtung government, and for uplifting her simple and ignorant masses to better life and wisdom. Borrowing from other countries neither money nor blood, Japan is undertaking this tremendous work single-handed and alone. I do not know why we cannot be praised by your countrymen. But we are terribly blamed by them, as it seems, for our heroism and aim.

Sometime ago the Chinese army defeated in Huntung province by Hwangho River, had cut from desperate madness several places of the river bank ; not keeping in check the advancing Japanese army, it only made thirty hundred thousand people drown in the flood and one hundred thousand village houses destroyed. Defending the welfare of its own kinsmen or killing them,—which is the object of the Chinese army, I wonder ? It is strange that such an atrocious inhuman conduct ever known in the world

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history did not become in the west a target of condemnation. Oh where are your humanitarians who profess to be a guardian of humanity ? Are they deaf and blind ? Besides the Chinese soldiers, miserably paid and poorly clothed, are a habitual criminal of robbery, and then an everlasting menace to the honest hard-working people who cling to the ground. Therefore the Japanese soldiers are followed by them with the paper flags of the Rising Sun in their hands ; to a soldierly work we have to add one more endeavour in the relief work of them. You can imagine how expensive is this war for Japan. Putting expenditure out of the question, we are determined to use up our last cent for the final victory that would ensure in the future a great peace of many hundred years.

I received the other day a letter from my western friend, denouncing the world that went to Hell. I replied him, saying : "Oh my friend, you should cover your ears, when a war bugle rings too wild. Shut your eyes against a picture of your martial cousins becoming a fish salad ! Be patient, my friend, for a war is only spasmodic matter that cannot last long, but will adjust one's condition better in the end. You are a coward if you are afraid of it. Nothing worthy will be done unless you pass through a severe trial. And the peace that follows after a war is most important." For this peace we Japanese are ready to exhaust our resources of money and blood.

Today we are called under the flag of "Service-making," each person of the country doing his own bit for the realization of idealism. There was no time as today in the whole history of Japan, when all the people, from the Emperor to a rag-picker in the street, consolidated together with one mind. And there is no more foolish supposition as that our financial bankruptcy is a thing settled if the war drags on. Since the best part of the Chinese continent is already with us in friendly terms, we are not fighting with the whole of China. Our enemy is only the Kuomingtung government, a miserable puppet of the west. If Chiang Kai-shek wishes a long war, we are quite ready for it. Five years ? Ten years ? Twenty years ? As long as he desires, my friend. Now one year has passed since the first bullet was exchanged between China and Japan ; but with a fresh mind as if it sees that the war has just begun, we are now looking the event in the face. After the fall of Hankow, the Kuomingtung government will retire to a remote place of her country ; but until the western countries change their attitude towards China, we will keep up fighting with fists or wisdom.

The Japanese poverty is widely advertised in the west, though I do not know how it was started. Japan is poor beyond doubt,—well, according to the measure you wish to apply to. But I think that the Japanese poverty is a fabricated story as much as richness of China. There is no country in the world like Japan, where money is equally divided among the people.

Supposing that we are poor, I will say that we are trained to stand the pain of poverty. Japan is very strong in adversity.

But you will be surprised to know that the postal saving of people comes up now to five thousand million *yen*, responding to the government's propaganda of economy. For going on, surmounting every difficulty that the war brings in, we are saving every cent and even making good use of waste scraps. Since the war began, we grew spiritually strong and true ten times more than before. There is nothing hard to accomplish to a young man. Yes, Japan is the land of young men. According to nature's law, the old has to retire while the young advances. Behold, the sun is arising, be gone all the sickly bats and dirty vermins ! Cursed be one's intrigue and empty pride that sin against nature's rule and justice.

China could very well avoid the war, of course, if Chiang Kai-shek was more sensible with insight. Listening to an irresponsible third party of the west a long way off, thinking too highly of his own strength, he turned at last his own country, as she is today, into a ruined desert to which fifty years would not be enough for recovery. He never happened to think for a moment that the friendship of western countries was but a trick of their monetary interest itself in his country. And it is too late now for Chiang to reproach them for the faithlessness of their words of promise.

For a long time we had been watching with doubt at Chiang's program, the consolidation of the country, because the Chinese history had no period when the country was unified in the real meaning, and the subjugation of various war-lords under his flag was nothing. Until all the people took an oath of co-operation with him, we thought, his program was no more than a table talk. Being hasty and thoughtless, Chiang began to popularize the anti-Japanese movement among the students who were pigmy politicians in some meaning because he deemed it to be a method for the speedy realization of his program ; but he never thought that he was erring from the Oriental ethics that preached on one's friendship with the neighbours. Seeing that his propagation had too great effect on his young followers, he had no way to keep in check their wild jingoism, and then finally made his country roll down along the slope of destruction. Chiang is a living example who sold his country to the west for nothing, and smashed his skin with the crime of westernization. Dear Rabindranath, what will you say about this Chiang Kai-shek ?

Dear poet, today we have to turn our deaf ears towards a lesson of freedom that may come from America, because the people there already ceased to practice it. The ledger-book diplomacy of England is too well known through the world. I am old enough to know from experience that no man is better than others, while one country being no more worse than

others. Though I admit that Japan is today ruled by militarism, natural to the actual condition of the country, I am glad that enough freedom of speaking and acting is allowed to one like myself. Japan is fairly liberal in spite of the war time. So I can say without fear to be locked up that those service-crazy people are drunken, and that a thing in the world, great and true, because of its connection with the future, only comes from one who hates to be a common human unit, stepping aside so that he can unite himself with Eternity. I believe that such a one who withdraws into a snail's shell for the quest of life's hopeful future, will be in the end a true patriot, worthy of his own nation. Therefore I am able not to disgrace the name of poet, and to try to live up to the words of Browning who made the Grammarian exclaim :

"Leave Now for dogs and apes ! Man has Forever."

Your very sincerely,
Yone Noguchi.

* * * * *

"*Uttarayan*,"
Santiniketan, Bengal.
September 1, 1938.

Dear Noguchi,

I am profoundly surprised by the letter that you have written to me : neither its temper nor its contents harmonise with the spirit of Japan which I learnt to admire in your writings and came to love through my personal contacts with you. It is sad to think that the passion of collective militarism may on occasion helplessly overwhelm even the creative artist, that genuine intellectual power should be led to offer its dignity and truth to be sacrificed at the shrine of the dark gods of war.

You seem to agree with me in your condemnation of the massacre of Ethiopia by Fascist Italy but you would reserve the murderous attack on Chinese millions for judgment under a different category. But surely judgments are based on principle, and no amount of special pleading can change the fact that in launching a ravening war on Chinese humanity, with all the deadly methods learnt from the West, Japan is infringing every moral principle on which civilisation is based. You claim that Japan's situation was unique, forgetting that military situations are always unique, and that pious war-lords, convinced of peculiarly individual justification for their atrocities have never failed to arrange for special alliances with divinity for annihilation and torture on a large scale.

Humanity, in spite of its many failures, has believed in a fundamental

moral structure of society. When you speak, therefore, of "the inevitable means, terrible it is though, for establishing a new great world in the Asiatic continent"—signifying, I suppose, the bombing on Chinese women and children and the desecration of ancient temples and Universities as a means of saving China for Asia—you are ascribing to humanity a way of life which is not even inevitable among the animals and would certainly not apply to the East, in spite of her occasional aberrations. You are building your conception of an Asia which would be raised on a tower of skulls. I have, as you rightly point out, believed in the message of Asia, but I never dreamt that this message could be identified with deeds which brought exaltation to the heart of Tamer Lane at his terrible efficiency in manslaughter. When I protested against "Westernisation" in my lectures in Japan, I contrasted the rapacious Imperialism which some of the *Nations* of Europe were cultivating with the ideal of perfection preached by Buddha and Christ, with the great heritages of culture and good neighbourliness that went to the making of Asiatic and other civilisations. I felt it to be my duty to warn the land of Bushido, of great Art and traditions of noble heroism, that this phase of scientific savagery which victimised Western humanity and had led their helpless masses to a moral cannibalism was never to be imitated by a virile people who had entered upon a glorious renaissance and had every promise of a creative future before them. The doctrine of "Asia for Asia" which you enunciate in your letter, as an instrument of political blackmail, has all the virtues of the lesser Europe which I repudiate and nothing of the larger humanity that makes us one across the barriers of political labels and divisions. I was amused to read the recent statement of a Tokyo politician that the military alliance of Japan with Italy and Germany was made for "highly spiritual and moral reasons" and "had no materialistic considerations behind them". Quite so. What is not amusing is that artists and thinkers should echo such remarkable sentiments that translate military swagger into spiritual bravado. In the West, even in the critical days of war-madness, there is never any dearth of great spirits who can raise their voice above the din of battle, and defy their own war-mongers in the name of humanity. Such men have suffered, but never betrayed the conscience of their peoples which they represented. Asia will not be westernised if she can learn from such men: I still believe that there are such souls in Japan though we do not hear of them in those newspapers that are compelled at the cost of their extinction to reproduce their military master's voice.

"The betrayal of intellectuals" of which the great French writer spoke after the European war, is a dangerous symptom of our Age. You speak of the savings of the poor people of Japan, their silent sacrifice and suffering and take pride in betraying that this pathetic sacrifice is being exploited for

gun running and invasion of a neighbour's hearth and home, that human wealth of greatness is pillaged for inhuman purposes. Propaganda, I know, has been reduced to a fine art, and it is almost impossible for peoples in non-democratic countries to resist hourly doses of poison, but one had imagined that at least the men of intellect and imagination would themselves retain their gift of independent judgment. Evidently such is not always the case ; behind sophisticated arguments seem to lie a mentality of perverted nationalism which makes the "intellectuals" of to-day go blustering about their "ideologies" dragooning their own "masses" into paths of dissolution. I have known your people and I hate to believe that they could deliberately participate in the organised drugging of Chinese men and women by opium and heroin, but they do not know ; in the meanwhile, representatives of Japanese culture in China are busy practising their craft on the multitudes caught in the grip of an organisation of a wholesale human pollution. Proofs of such forcible drugging in Manchukuo and China have been adduced by unimpeachable authorities. But from Japan there has come no protest, not even from her poets.

Holding such opinions as many of your intellectuals do, I am not surprised that they are left "free" by your Government to express themselves. I hope they enjoy their freedom. Retiring from such freedom into "a snail's shell" in order to savour the bliss of meditation "on life's hopeful future", appears to me to be an unnecessary act, even though you advice Japanese artists to do so by way of change. I cannot accept such separation between an artist's function and his moral conscience. The luxury of enjoying special favouritism by virtue of identity with a Government which is engaged in demolition, in its neighbourhood, of all salient bases of life, and of escaping, at the same time, from any direct responsibility by a philosophy of escapism, seems to me to be another authentic symptom of the modern intellectual's betrayal of humanity. Unfortunately the rest of the world is almost cowardly in any adequate expression of its judgment owing to ugly possibilities that it may be hatching for its own future and those who are bent upon doing mischief are left alone to defile their history and blacken their reputation for all time to come. But such impunity in the long run bodes disaster, like unconsciousness of disease in its painless progress of ravage.

I speak with utter sorrow for your people ; your letter has hurt me to the depths of my being. I know that one day the disillusionment of your people will be complete, and through laborious centuries they will have to clear the debris of their civilisation wrought to ruin by their own war-lords run amok. They will realise that the aggressive war on China is insignificant as compared to the destruction of the inner spirit of chivalry of Japan

which is proceeding with a ferocious severity. China is unconquerable, her civilisation, under the dauntless leadership of Chiang Kai-Shek, is displaying marvellous resources ; the desperate loyalty of her peoples, united as never before, is creating a new age for that land. Caught unprepared by a gigantic machinery of war, hurled upon her peoples, China is holding her own ; no temporary defeats can ever crush her fully aroused spirit. Faced by the borrowed science of Japanese militarism which is crudely western in character, China's stand reveals an inherently superior moral stature. And today I understand more than ever before the meaning of the enthusiasm with which the big-hearted Japanese thinker Okakura assured me that *China is great.*

You do not realise that you are glorifying your neighbour at your own cost. But these are considerations on another plane : the sorrow remains that Japan, in the words of Madame Chiang Kai-Shek which you must have read in the *Spectator*, is creating so many ghosts. Ghosts of immemorial works of Chinese art, of irreplaceable Chinese institutions, of great peace-loving communities drugged, tortured, and destroyed. "Who will lay the ghosts ?" she asks. Japanese and Chinese people, let us hope, will join hands together, in no distant future, in wiping off memories of a bitter past. True Asian humanity will be reborn. Poets will raise their song and be unashamed, one believes, to declare their faith again in a human destiny which cannot admit of a scientific mass production of fratricide.

Yours sincerely,
Rabindranath Tagore.

P. S.—I find that you have already released your letter to the Press ; I take it that you want me to publish my answer in the same manner.

* * * * *

41 Sakurayama,
Nakano, Tokyo.
Oct. 2nd, 1938.

Dear Tagore,

Your eloquent letter, dated Sept. 1st. was duely* received. I am glad that the letter inspired me to write you once more.

No one in Japan denies the greatness of China,—I mean the Chinese people. China of the olden times was great with philosophy, literature and art,—particularly in the T'ang dynasty. Under Chinese influence Japan started to build up her own civilization. But I do not know why we should

* Throughout this correspondence we have retained the original spelling.—*Ed.*

not oppose to the misguided government of China for the old debt we owe her people. And nobody in Japan ever dreams that we can conquer China. What Japan is doing in China, it is only, as I already said, to correct the mistaken idea of Chiang Kai-shek ; on this object Japan is staking her all. If Chiang comes to senses and extends his friendly hands for the future of both the countries, China and Japan, the war will be stopped at once.

I am glad that you still admire Kakuzo Okakura with enthusiasm as a thinker. If he lives to-day, I believe that he will say the same thing as I do. Betraying your trust, many Chinese soldiers in the front surrender to our Japanese force, and join with us in the cry, "Down with Chiang Kai-shek !" Where is Chinese loyality to him ?

Having no proper organ of expression, Japanese opinion is published only seldom in the west ; and real fact is always hidden and often comouflaged by cleverness of the Chinese who are a born propagandist. They are strong in foreign languages, and their tongues never fail. While the Japanese are always reticent, even when situation demands their explanation. From the experiences of many centuries, the Chinese, have cultivated an art of speaking, for they had been put under such a condition that divided their country to varuous antagonistic divisions ; and being always encroached by the western countries, they depended on diplomacy to turn a thing to their advantage. Admitting that China completely defeated Japan in foreign publicity, it is sad that she often goes too far, and plays trickery. For one instance I will call your attention to the reproduced picture from a Chinese paper on page 247 of the Modern Review for last August, as a living specimen of "Japanese Atrocities in China : Execution of a Chinese Civilians." So awful pictures they are,—awful enough to make ten thousand enemies of Japan in a foreign country. But the pictures are nothing but a Chinese invention, simple and plain, because the people in the scenes are all Chinese, slaughterers and all. Besides any one with commonsense would know, if he stops for a moment, that it is impossible to take such a picture as these at the front. Really I cannot understand how your friend-editor of the modern Review happened to published them.

It is one's right to weave a dream at the distance, and to create an object of sympathy at the expense of China. Believe me that I am second to none in understanding the Chinese masses who are patient and dilligent, clinging to the ground. But it seems that you are not acquainted with the China of corruption and bribery, and of war lords who put money in a foreign bank when their country is at stake. So long as the country is controlled by such polluted people, the Chinese have only a little chance to create a new age in their land. They have to learn first of all the meaning of honesty and sacrifice before dreaming it. But for this new age in Asia,

Japan is engaging in the war, hoping to obtain a good result and mutual benefit that follow the swords. We must have a neighbouring country, strong and true, which is glad to co-operate with us in our work of reconstructing Asia in the new way. That is only what we expect from China.

Japan's militarism is a tremendous affair no doubt. But if you condemn Japan, because of it, you are failing to notice that Chiang's China is a far more great military country than Japan. China is now mobilizing seven or eight million soldiers armed with European weapons. From cowardice or being ignorant of the reason why they had to fight, the Chinese soldiers are so unspirited in the front. But for this unavailability you connot forgive Chiang's militarism, if your denial is absolute and true. For the last twenty years Chiang had been trying to arm his country under the western advisers ; and these western advisers were mostly from Italy and Germany, the countries of which you are so impatient. And it should be attributed to their advice that he started war ; though it is too late to blame the countries that formally provided him with military knowledge, it is never too late for him to know that the western countries are not worthy of trust. There is no country in the world, that comes to rescue the other at her own expense. If you are a real sympathizer of China, you should come along with your program what she had to do, not passing idly with your condemnation of Japan's militarism. And if you have to condemn militarism, that condemnation should be equally divided between China and Japan.

It is true that when two quarrel, both are in the wrong. And when fighting is over, both the parties will be put perhaps in the mental situation of one who is crying over spilt milk. War is atrocious,—particularly when it is performed in a gigantic way as in China today. I hope that you will let me apply your accusation of Japanese atrocity to China, just as it is. Seeing no atrocity in China, you are speaking about her as an innocent country. I expected something impartial from a poet.

I have to think (*sic*) you that you called my attention to the "Modern intellectual's betrayal of humanity," whatever it be. One can talk any amount of idealism, apart from in reality, if he wishes, and take the pleasure of one belonging to no country. But sharing patriotism equally with the others, we are trying to acquit the duty of our birthright, and believe that it is never too late to talk Heaven when immediate matter of the earth is well arranged.

Supposing that we accept your advice to become a van-guard of humanity according to your prescription, and supposing that we leave China to her own will, and save ourselves from being a "betrayal of the intellectuals," who will promise us with the safety of Japanese spirit that we cultivated with pairs of thousand years, under the threat of communism across a

fence ? We don't want to barter our home land for an empty name of intellectuals. No, you musn't talk nonsense ! God forbid !

Admitting, that militarism is criminal, I think that, if your humanity makes life a mutilated mud-fish, its crime would never be smaller than the other. I spent my whole life admiring beauty and truth, with one hope to lift life to a dignity, more vigorous and noble ; from this reason, I knelt before the Kalighat, Calcutta, because Kali's smeared face in madness, with three wild eyes, promised me with a forthcoming peace. And also at Elephanta Island ; near Bombay, I learned from the Three-headed Siva a lesson of destruction as inevitable truth of life. Then I wrote :

"Thy slaughter's sword is never so unkind as it appears.
Creation is great, but destroying is still greater,
Because up from the ashes new Wonder take its flight."

But if you command me to obey the meekness of humanity under all the circumstances, you are forgetting what your old Hindu philosophy taught you. I say this not only for my purpose, because such reflection is important for any country.

I wonder who reported to you that we are killing innocent people and bombing on their unprotected towns. Far from it, we are trying to do our best for helping them, because we have so much to depend on them for co-operation in the future, and because Bushido command us to limit purnishment to a thing which only deserves it. It was an apt measure of our Japanese soldiers that the famous cave temples of the 5th century in North China were saved from savage repacity of the dereated Shinese (*sic*) soldiers in flight. Except madame chiang with frustrated brain, no one has seen the "ghosts of Chinese institutions and art, destroyed". And if those institutions and art, admitting that they are immemorial and irreplacable, had been ever destroyed, it is but the crazy work of Chinese soldiers, because they want to leave a desert to Japan. You ought to know better since you are acquainted with so many Japanese, whether or not we are qualified to do anything barbarous.

I believe that you are versed in Bushido. In olden times soldiery was lifted in Japan to a status equally high as that of art and morality. I have no doubt that our soldiers will not betray the tradition. If there is difference in Japanese militarism from that of the west, it is because the former is not without moral element. Who only sees its destroying power is blind to its other power in preservation. Its human aspect is never known in the foreign countries, because they shut their eyes to it. Japan is still an unknown existence in the west. Having so many things to displease you, Japanese militarism has still something that will please you, if you come to know more about it. It is an excusable existence for the present condition

of Japan. But I will leave the full explanation of it to some later occasion.

Believe me that I am never an eulogist of Japanese militarism, because I have many differences with it. But I cannot help accepting as a Japanese what Japan is doing now under the circumstances, because I see no other way to show our minds to China. Of course when China stops fighting, and we receive her friendly hands, neither grudge nor ill feeling will remain in our minds. Perhaps with some sense of repentance, we will then proceed together on the great work of reconstructing the new world in Asia.

I often draw in my mind a possible man who can talk from a high domain and act as a peace-maker. You might write General Chiang, I hope, and tell him about the foolishness of fighting in the presence of a great work that is waiting. And I am sorry that against the high-pitches nature of your letter, mine is low-toned and faltering, because as a Japanese subject I belong to one of the responsible parties of the conflict.

Finally one word more. What I fear most is the present atmosphere in India, that tends to wilfully blacken Japan to alienate her from your country. I have so many friends there, whose beautiful nature does not harmonise with it. My last experiences in your country taught me how to love and respect her. Besides there are in Japan so many admirers of your countrymen with your noble self as the first.

Yours sincerely,
Yone Noguchi.

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"*Uttarayana*",
Santiniketan, Bengal.
October, 1938.

Dear Noguchi,

I thank you for taking the trouble to write to me again. I have also read with interest your letter addressed to the Editor, Amrita Bazar Patrika, and published in that journal.* It makes the meaning of your letter to me more clear.

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* The following is the text of the letter referred to :

Dear Editor,

Dr. Tagore's reply to my letter was a disappointment, to use his words, hurted me to the depths of my being. Now I am conscious that language is an ineffective instrument to carry one's real meaning. When I wanted an impartial criticism he gave me some-,

I am flattered that you still consider it worthwhile to take such pains to convert me to your point of view, and I am really sorry that I am unable to come to my senses, as you have been pleased to wish it. It seems to me that it is futile for either of us to try to convince the other since your faith in the infallible right of Japan to bully other Asiatic nations into line with your Government's policy is not shared by me, and my faith that patriotism which claims the right to bring to the altar of its country the sacrifice of *other* people's rights and happiness will endanger rather than strengthen the foundation of any great civilization, is sneered at by you as the "quiescence of a spiritual vagabond".

If you can convince the Chinese that your armies are bombing their cities and rendering their women and children homeless beggars—those of them that are not transformed into "mutilated mud-fish", to borrow one of your own phrases—, if you can convince these victims that they are only being subjected to a benevolent treatment which will in the end "save" their nation, it will no longer be necessary for you to convince us of your country's noble intentions. Your righteous indignation against the "polluted people" who are burning their own cities and art-treasures (and presumably bombing their own citizens) to malign your soldiers, reminds me of Napoleon's noble wrath when he marched into a deserted Moscow and watched its palaces in flames. I should have expected from you who are a poet at least that much of imagination to

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thing of prejudiced bravado under the beautiful name of humanity. Just for a handful of dream, and for an intellectual's ribbon to stick in his coat, he has lost a high office to correct the mistaken idea of reality.

It seems to us that when Dr. Tagore called the doctrine of "Asia for Asia" a political blackmail, he relinquished his patriotism to boast quiescence of a spiritual vagabond, and wilfully supporting the Chinese side, is encouraging Soviet Russia, not to mention the other Western countries. I meant my letter to him to be a plea for the understanding of Japan's view-point, which, in spite of its many failures, is honest. I wonder whether it is a poet's privilege to give one whipping before listening to his words. When I dwelled on the saving of the people of Japan at the present time of conflict, he denounced it as their government's exploitation "for gun running and invasion of a neighbour's hearth and home." But when he does not use the same language towards his friend China his partiality is something monstrous. And I wonder where is his former heart which made us Japanse love him and honour him. But still we are patient, believing that he will come to senses and take a neutral dignity fitting to a prophet who does not depart from fair judgment.

Living in a country far from your country, I do not know where Dr. Tagore's reply appeared in print. Believing that you are known to his letter, I hope that you will see way to print this letter of mine in your esteemed paper.

Yours sincerely
Yone Noguchi.

feel, to what inhuman despair a people must be reduced to willingly burn their own handiwork of years', indeed centuries', labour. And even as a good nationalist, do you seriously believe that the mountain of bleeding corpses and the wilderness of bombed and burnt cities that is every day widening between your two countries, is making it easier for your two peoples to stretch your hands in a clasp of ever-lasting good will ?

You complain that while the Chinese, being "dishonest", are spreading their malicious propaganda, your people, being "honest", are reticent. Do you not know, my friend, that there is no propaganda like good and noble deeds, and that if such deeds be yours, you need fear no "trickery" of your victims ? Nor need you fear the bogey of communism if there is no exploitation of the poor among your own people and the workers feel that they are justly treated.

I must thank you for explaining to me the meaning of our Indian philosophy and of pointing out that the proper interpretation of Kali and Shiva must compel our approval of Japan's "dance of death" in China. I wish you had drawn a moral from a religion more familiar to you and appealed to the Buddha for your justification. But I forgot that your priests and artists have already made sure of that, for I saw in a recent issue of "The Osaka Mainichi and The Tokyo Nichi Nichi" (16th September, 1938) a picture of a new colossal image of Buddha erected to bless the massacre of your neighbours.

You must forgive me if my words sound bitter. Believe me, it is sorrow and shame, not anger, that prompt me to write to you. I suffer intensely not only because the reports of Chinese suffering batter against my heart, but because I can no longer point out with pride the example of a great Japan. It is true that there are no better standards prevalent anywhere else and that the so-called civilized peoples of the West are proving equally barbarous and even less "worthy of trust". If you refer me to them, I have nothing to say. What I should have liked is to be able to refer them to you. I shall say nothing of my own people, for it is vain to boast until one has succeeded in sustaining one's principles to the end.

I am quite conscious of the honour you do me in asking me to act as a peace-maker. Were it in any way possible for me to bring you two peoples together and see you freed from this death-struggle and pledged to the great common "work of reconstructing the new world in Asia", I would regard the sacrifice of my life in the cause a proud privilege. But I have no power save that of moral persuasion, which you have so eloquently ridiculed. You who want me to be impartial, how can you expect me to appeal to Chiang Kai-Shek to give up resisting until the aggressors have first given up their aggression ? Do you know that last week when I received a pressing invita-

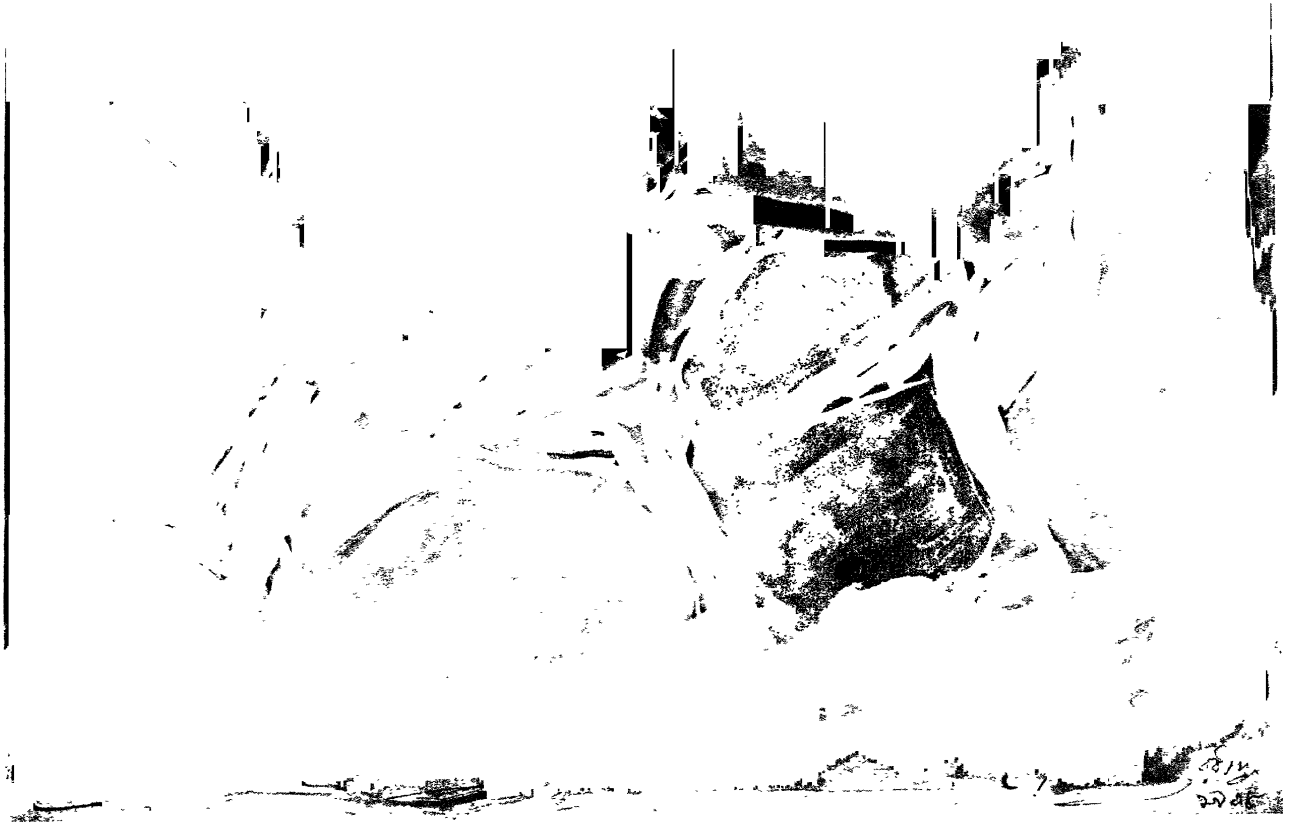
tion from an old friend of mine in Japan to visit your country, I actually thought for a moment, foolish idealist as I am, that your people may really need my services to minister to the bleeding heart of Asia and to help extract from its riddled body the bullets of hatred ? I wrote to my friend :

"Though the present state of my health is hardly favourable for any strain of a long foreign journey, I should seriously consider your proposal if proper opportunity is given me to carry out my own mission while there, which is to do my best to establish a civilised relationship of national amity between two great peoples of Asia who are entangled in a desolating mutual destruction. But as I am doubtful whether the military authorities of Japan, which seem bent upon devastating China in order to gain their object, will allow me the freedom to take my own course, I shall never forgive myself if I am tempted for any reason whatever to pay a friendly visit to Japan just at this unfortunate moment and thus cause a grave misunderstanding. You know I have a genuine love for the Japanese people and it is sure to hurt me too painfully to go and watch crowds of them being transported by their rulers to a neighbouring land to perpetrate acts of inhumanity which will brand their name with a lasting stain in the history of Man."

After the letter was despatched came the news of the fall of Canton and Hankow. The cripple, shorn of his power to strike, may collapse, but to ask him to forget the memory of his mutilation as easily as you want me to, I must expect him to be an angel.

Wishing your people whom I love, not success, but remorse,

Yours sincerely,
Rabindranath Tagore.



European Politics ?

By Rabindranath Tagore

MAHJOOR—A POET OF KASHMIR

Balraj Sahni

THIS was four years ago. The air on the lake was freezingly cold. The sun had disappeared behind the snow-collar of Tosh Medan mountains, plunging the valley in a premature gloom. That was not all. The edges of our boat had run level with the surface of the lake for over three hours. A slight irregularity in the boatman's jerks sent half a seer of water under our seats. We had good reasons to apprehend a sudden plunge to the bottom of the lake, and a nasty, chilly death.

The boat was not to blame. It could go singing like an arrow if it carried a reasonable load. But we were no less than seven passengers : our host, who sat like one condemned ; Prof. Devendra Satyarthi—who collects folk-songs like the municipal rat-catchers ; our host's *munshi* ; a servant who puffed incessantly into the samovar ; our Kashmiri boatman, who was discovered too late to be completely deaf and half blind ; a friend of his, who was there for no earthly reason ; and myself. Naturally our host's confession, that these boats were designed by pleasure-loving Moghuls chiefly for the benefit of lovers, was not very stimulating.

Had we kept direction there would have been no cause for anxiety ; because the village we were going to was only eight miles from Srinagar, two hours' run by boat. But the deaf *Hanji* had lost the way and refused to be impressed by our remonstrations. To whatever we said he merely nodded and did the opposite. The result was that we were still dodging about in the reed-banked canals of the lake and the floating vegetable gardens. On the host's advice we were now silent. With our hands tucked under our sleeves we sat crumpled like prunes, watching the stars which looked like so many meaningless holes in the sky.

At this inauspicious moment our boatman's friend, who had hitherto sat inert in the depths of his *lohi*, burst into song. It wasn't singing, it was an outrage. So loud was it and so menacing that it even frightened the birds.

Vani Mahjoor husnak afsana
Yani sui yar bani yiy janana
Gane yath kya bozan Handwarieye
Soze dil myane boziban karieye,

Obviously he had no sympathy at all with our sunken spirits. If the boat capsized he would throw off his *lohi* and swim whistling to some lighted boat, or if none was near, even to the distant shores of the lake. One could see that he was none of the obsequious townspeople who, to sell an apple, salaam the purchaser's entire household. He was a villager, who had learnt from experience that "a Panjabi's friendship is as shortlived as the fire of pinewood." Our lives did not matter two straws to him.

Somehow this outburst tickled me. I asked the host as to what the lines meant. His translation was :—

> Mahjoor will create a picture of beauty.
> Only he can appreciate it who has known his beloved ;
> How can the people of Handwara see its meaning ?
> O Jungle-myna (my beloved), hear the sorrow of my heart.

The beauty of the song appealed to me. For several years, like many thousands of other visitors to Kashmir, I had passed my summers, content with the spectacle of glorious landscapes, never bothering to think that the heart of a people who lived in such unrivalled surroundings may have something of beauty to offer. I felt I was no better than the yokel of Handwara whom the author of those lines had ridiculed. I also felt curious about the author. I asked the Kashmiri as to who had written the song.

"Mahjoor Sharif," he replied with a brevity common to all villagers.

"Where does he live ?"

"Oh, Mahjoor Sharif ? Oh, he lives far far away," he exclaimed, waving his arms in all directions ; "he lives in Ajmer Sharif."

He proved to be a liar. On returning to Srinagar I learnt, but not without difficulty, that Mahjoor's full name was Ghulam Ahmed and that he was a Patwari in the nearby district of Sopore.

Such is the paradoxical popularity enjoyed by the poet to whom these lines are dedicated, that there are few Kashmiris who know anything at all about his person. Some think he is dead, some assign to him the romantic glow of far away places. When his work takes him to the capital he walks through the streets unnoticed. And yet his songs and his poems are the cherished property of every man, woman and child, living between Baramula and Pir Panchal. If Mahjoor writes a poem to-day, it will be on the lips of the populace within a fortnight. Children on their way to school, girls thrashing rice, boatmen plying the paddle, labourers bending in their ceaseless toil, all will be singing it. In a predominantly illiterate country where, if such things were marketed in printed form not more than ten copies would sell, such a broadcasting system is almost miraculous.

Many weeks passed after this accidental introduction to the name of Mahjoor. In spite of many resolutions to hunt out the poet without delay, it was a long time before I met him. In the meantime, however, I gleaned a few souvenirs of his poetry, which I reproduce below. This was autumn time, when visitors have returned and the Kashmiris have leisure to sing, marry, and spin wool. The job was not difficult.

1. *Baghe Nishat ke gulo*
Naaz karan karan valo, etc. etc.

This is a most popular song and is charming in its delicacy of sentiment. Here is a rough translation :—

O flowers of the Nishat garden,
Come dancing towards me coquettishly.
Come laughing,
Scattering pearls.
My two eyes are waiting for you ;
Leap on to them.
I shall take you out for a pleasure tour.
Then you can watch your reflections in the waters of the Dall ;
You can clap to the Nishat and Shalamar from a distance.
My two eyes are your boats.

Natural enough, this song has many picturesque parodies. Here is one from the lips of a school-boy :—

O flowers of Nishat,
Come to me chewing tobacco, etc.

The boy's invitation is not difficult to interpret.

2. My heart is always restless on account of the beloved's absence. May I not console it on some other resilient bosom ?

3. My childhood, running swiftly like the Rambeyar river, has slipped out of my hands. Impossible is its return. The meadows on the banks have been burnt. Ah that childhood ! Ah that first stir of youth !

4. The lovers said, "The heart is a valuable diamond. Let us find out its price in the market of beauty."

5. Burning from the love of you I could not sleep the whole night. I kept picking saffron flowers, with my eyes ever in the direction of your house. Now I am tired. Will you come tonight ? If not for me, come to see the beauty of my saffron fields in the moonlight.

These quotations are random gleanings and give but a scanty idea of Mahjoor's poetry. It is however admitted that the beauty of his poetry lies more in its music and refined sentiment than depth of thought. It has the water-colour delicacy of Kashmir landscape.

Then one day, again by accident, I ran into Mahjoor; or, to be precise, my tonga almost ran over him. The man who had just escaped by the breadth of a hair, and who quietly walked away to avoid fuss, was, I was informed by my companion, Mahjoor himself. He wore a heavy turban more funny than useful, and under its massivity there was a face, the most unimpressive in the world. Yet, here was the man who had unquestionable sway over the hearts of lakhs of people. Mahjoor has only to lift his little finger to lead people whichever way he wants to. But ambition is not a part of his make-up. He hates the limelight. During the recent agitations he has been offered big sums of money to write inflammatory songs which should stir up communal hatred. But, poor as he is, he has always refused such offers. Nothing can disturb Mahjoor's love of anonymity and solitude.

I jumped from the tonga and caught hold of the vagabond poet. I am glad to say that in subsequent months he honoured me with his friendship, and I was able to obtain some information about his life at first hand.

Ghulam Ahmed Mahjoor was born in the village of Mitri in Avantipur district, about twenty miles from Srinagar, in the year 1888. His father, Pir Abdullah Shah, was a landlord and a hereditary priest. Mahjoor was brought up in an atmosphere of comfort and respect. But after his father's death he gave up *Pirhood* and espoused the simple life of a man in the street. He has, to this day, an instinctive repulsion for parasitic *mullahs* and *pujaris*.

As was to be expected, Persian and Arabic were the only education given to Mahjoor by his father ; but the boy's fascination for the mother-tongue, his habit of making rhymes, was noticed, and, in face of social ridicule, encouraged. Makbul Shah, a Kashmiri poet of yore, influenced the boy a great deal. The tale of prince Ajab-ul-mallik and his sweetheart Noshelab he learnt by heart.

Mahjoor began his poetical career in Persian, owing to the unfortunate prejudices of the educated class against the mother-tongue. He was ill-satisfied. In 1911 he paid a visit to the Panjab, and received encouragement from well-known scholars who, at the same time, inclined him towards

Urdu. For another thirteen years Mahjoor wavered between Urdu and Persian. It is tragic the way our brilliant youths fritter away their best years experimenting with languages.

At last the day came when a trivial incident revolutionised Mahjoor's entire outlook. Those moments of first inspiration are ineffaceably carved on the poet's mind. It was like this. One evening, in utter depression of spirit, Mahjoor wandered to a village and sat down under a chinar tree to muse upon his frustrated existence. Suddenly he saw a group of village girls approaching and singing a three-hundred-year-old song-poem written by Habba Khatoun, a queen of Kashmir.

Poshan manz ha vathuravai
Valo mya ni poshe madano.
Valo mati gach vo hieye
Yusmari sukateyo yieye
Praran chchyas yo zieye
Valo mya ni poshe madano.

One need not reproduce the whole poem. A stanza is enough to illustrate its remarkable cadences. Here is a translation of the poem, which is addressed to Kamdev, the god of love :—

I shall make a couch among the roses :
Come, O Kamdev, come.
I, with my friends, went to cull *chambeli* flowers.
There I thought,
Once departed who returns again ?
And I longed for your consolation.

Come, my Enchanter,
Together we shall go to the meadows of fragrant Babbar.
My lover has sundered my heart with an axe,
And is gone forever.

Take me away, O Kamdev,
Beyond the fields of Hund.
These mad people have given me a bad name.
When will this riddle of destiny he solved ?

O Tell me. My own kith and kin
Are driving me crazy with their taunts.
Alas, I wish they should suffer like me.

We shall go to the forest, O Kamdev,
And I shall worship you,
I shall present you my golden ear-rings.
Remember, each is worth a worthless sovereign.

Let us go and fetch some water.
The world is drowned in the embrace of sleep.
I am waiting for your answer.

I wish I could go and pluck flowers,
But what shall I do ?
My Kamdev is annoyed with me,
He quickly slips away from my side.
I shall stir out to look for him
In the bosom of a moonlit night. May-be,
I shall discover the bundle of my lost days.

Habba, dear friends, has merely narrated
The tale of her suffering.

It is difficult to imagine the effect of this poem, sung by the village belles, against the background of snow-sealed mountains, leafless chinars, and winter-burnt fields, on a youthful heart, unless one knows something of the tragic life of Habba.

The above poem was written by Habba Khatoun, wife of Prince Usuf Chak, after the latter had been ruthlessly snatched away to a prison in Bengal. It was three hundred years ago. Habba was the daughter of a peasant. She was married off to one of her own class by her parents, but, gifted with a sensitive mind, she was unhappy. One evening, while working in the fields in company with some friends, she noticed a strange man watching her from under a chinar tree. This was no other than Prince Usuf Chak. They fell in love and married. For many a happy year Habba loved and wrote exquisite verse. Then the axe fell. Akbar invaded Kashmir. Habba was made a state prisoner in Kashmir while Usuf Chak was sent away to Bengal.

This strangely similar setting, lit by Habba's song, brought Mahjoor the awaited inspiration. He sat spell-bound. When he rose he was half-way through a poem in the same style and metre. He composed the rest of it within the next two days. The choice was made. Mahjoor has not written a word of Urdu since.

This first attempt of Mahjoor in the mother tongue was eminently

successful. It is to day one of the favourite poems in Kashmiri. A stanza in the original will reveal its felicitous music :—

Chul hama roshe roshe
Poshe mati jana no.
Vuch makha dure dure
Sango mum Sargach hoore
Chchyas vadan churc chure
Poshe mati jana no.

Here is a translation ot the poem, which, however, does little justice to the original :—

My lover, the great admirer of flowers,
Has run away from me in anger.

I saw him from a distance,
And yet, I, a hoorie of heaven,
Was lost in wonder.
And now I weep secretly.

Do not run away, O magician,
How can you make off like this ?
First teach me how to live without you.

On a lonely precipice I, your beloved,
Am looking out for you,
Am shedding blood instead of tears :
You will have to pay for this blood.

Only if you could come now,
So that I may show you the cinders
Which are my heart.
Will you come only when coming is no use ?

If so, with whom shall I leave my last message ?
Through whom shall I send you the list of my complaints ?
O indifferent lover, come, come but once.
I shall make your life a flower-bed.

O wanderer, lover of gaiety and mirth,

Why have you caught me in your trap ?
Why have you torn my heart to pieces ?

My love for you has given me a bad name.
In town and village the story of my love is raging,
Even those of my own sex fling daggers at me.

You left me on the road.
You placed a burning coal on my hand and left.

I weep over the vanity of the last flicker of my hopes.
He who brought me love left ashes in my hands.
The parrot left his myna in the jungle.

I left my home at night
To seek my beloved.
I did not know Destiny had laid a trap for me.

Whose jealousy has turned you against me ?
You have camped on the other side of the forest.
Have you really no love left for me ?

Immediately on rising I used to rush to your service.
To receive your love I destroyed my sleep.

God ! If my yearnings could bear fruit,
If you could be seen on my balcony once more !

O my charming lover,
On your return my health will come back too.
I shall again touch my hair with perfume.
I shall again adorn my silver-like body with costly dresses.

But you will not come, I forget.
I wish I had strength to become a *yogin*.
Ah ! I must allow sorrow to kill me slowly.

No. Like one mad I shall cry over housetops,
"O Fickle one, how dare you flee like this.
Come, first fulfill your promises !"
I shall send you letters full of complaint.

I shall even sue you in the court !

O vain. Come, my faithful maids,
It's no use. His ears have been poisoned.
I wonder if I shall ever see him again.

Let us resume our work, dear friends,
Or let us go to the Khan Bab fair.
I can't bear the prison my parents have set for me.
Will you, Poet Mahjoor, go and ask that fatal magician
Where else shall I look for him ?

Mahjoor selected a novel method of trying it on his audience. He knew that the so-called litterateurs will only have contempt for a poem written in the vulgar Kashmiri. So he made a few boys memorise it and asked them to sing it aloud in the streets of Srinagar. In a week the name of Mahjoor was a byword.

Mahjoor is now in his fiftieth year. I am not aware of the new poems written by him during the last four years ; but I am certain he has written a good deal. I am also sure, with his love of unassuming but hard labour, with his instinctive realisation of the noble in art, his work today must be maturer and deeper.

Being a stranger to the genius of the Kashmiri language it is not for me to give a critical estimate of the poet's work. But the unique popularity of Mahjoor among his own people, his charming personality, lead me to believe that his contribution to contemporary Kashmiri literature is considerable.

LEO TOLSTOI *

By M. Brovin.

THE whole of Leo Tolstoi's long life was a challenge to the old world which feared and hated the indomitable writer. Even his death, his lonely, unattended death on an obscure little railway station, was an event which caused the tsar and his ministers and gendarmes no little alarm and uneasiness. Tens of stormy student demonstrations ; scores of meetings of revolutionary workers ; hundreds of obituaries filled with condemnation of the court camarilla in newspapers and magazines, and thousands of telegrams of condolence from the best representatives of the world intelligentsia—this was the response of the advanced part of mankind to the death of this great and noble man.

Tolstoi spent all his long, tortured life searching for truth. A descendant of the nobility, a count and an officer with a dazzling career before him, he turned in scorn from his class, the class of parasites and exploiters. He elected to be the champion of the popular truth and justice and shouldered the heavy labours of writer and publicist.

People flocked from all parts of the earth to the little village of Yasnaya Polyana. Who indeed did not visit the great writer ! Beggars who had heard of the generous count, and elderly ladies who were "tired of life," hoary peasants in search of protection from the brutal overseer, and young disillusioned men of leisure, pitiful, epigonic Childe Harolds and members of all manner of religious sects came to see Tolstoi. Here, too, Tolstoi met Maxim Gorky, Anton Chekhov and Ilya Repin, the cream of the Russian intelligentsia. Tolstoi welcomed all and helped each one to the best of his material and spiritual abilities.

Tolstoi stood on the very vortex of public life. Not a single social event that occurred at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century passed him by. His every work, whether novel, tale, play or short story, every step he took in public affairs invariably had the widest repercussions.

Deputations of peasants who visited Tolstoi returned with legends of the great friend of the poor, the "father" of the peasants. The students acclaimed the writer as the "true teacher of life." The progressive section of the critics bowed before the artistic genius of the author of *War and Peace*. And

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* For the interest of our readers we reproduce this article on Leo Tolstoy from the *Moscow News*, September 12, 1938. It is good to know that the "Soviet people include his literary legacy among their treasured possessions."—*Ed.*

at the same time, the "holy synod" excommunicated Tolstoi, the apostate, from the church, raining on his head the curses of all the Russian priests. The tsarist censorship furiously banned his most innocent books, threatening him with prison and exile. The Black Hundreds abused him in the press and incited his murder.

Many are the books and critical articles that have been written about the life and activity of Tolstoi. Some have declared him a holy Russian, others a blasphemer, some have likened him to Rousseau and still others have branded him as a rabid "red." Odly Lenin gave a truly brilliant analysis of the writer, showing with astonishing clearness wherein he was really great and wherein helplessly weak.

* * * *

The activities of Tolstoi relate to that period in the history of Russia when the patriarchal village, liberated but yesterday from serfdom, was entirely at the mercy of commercial and industrial capital. The ancient pillars of the peasant economy, which had stood for centuries, collapsed with incredible rapidity.

Possessing amazing power of observation and intuition, Tolstoi, like the great artist he was, vividly portrayed the entire tremendous process of the dissolution of the patriarchal village and the rise of new capitalist relationships.

Tolstoi unhesitatingly sided with the oppressed. He directed the full force of his artistic genius against the foundations of the bourgeois-feudal system, brutally tearing all and every mask from its face. Lenin observes that by means of the "most sober realism" Tolstoi fearlessly exposed over a period of several decades the barbarity and savagery, the inhumanity and baseness of the bourgeois-feudal civilization.

The writer's pen was a sharp-edged scalpel with which he opened up the festering sores of bourgeois society and revealed the vice and corruption of the tsarist state. In his works he laid bare to the whole world the repulsive picture of the decaying bourgeois-land-owner society.

Millions of readers in all the countries of the world have seen through the pages of *Resurrection* the corruption, falseness and class partiality of the tsarist court. Who does not remember Tolstoi's words full of noble agitation and bitterness when, describing the atmosphere in the court which condemned Katusha Maslova to exile, he observes that the court-room contained the "invariable attributes of the places in which justice was dispensed: icons, the emblem of hypocrisy, and the portrait of the tsar, the emblem of servility." As for the judges themselves, Tolstoi's characterization is truly annihilating:

"I am actually afraid of them. And indeed these are terrible people. More terrible than brigands ! A brigand may, after all, feel pity—but these cannot ; they are insured against pity as stones are against vegetation. And in this they are terrible."

Tolstoi strove to show the hard lot of the enslaved peasantry in all his works. Particularly moving, however, are the pictures drawn by the author in his *After the Ball.* It is impossible to read unmoved his description of the fearful flogging to which the unhappy, down-trodden peasants in soldiers' uniforms were subjected. . .

Another link in the chain which Tolstoi tirelessly forged throughout his life is *Anna Karenina.* This time he chose to depict the family relations, the life of the so-called "beau monde" of the landowners and nobles. The fate of a woman who sought to gain a minimum of freedom in capitalist society, the tragedy of this woman, her inevitable disaster is the theme of his great literary work. Tolstoi showed with the utmost clarity and unquestionable truth how brutally bourgeois society twists a woman's personality, demands slavish subjection, duplicity and pharisaism from her.

Anna Karenina may be said to complete the gallery of women painted by the great Balzac, Flaubert, Pushkin, Ostrovsky and other representatives of critical realism of the 19th century.

Tolstoi reached the height of his artistic genius in *War and Peace,* however. The grand panorama of the war waged by the Russian people against Napoleon's invasion is a valuable historical epic which will survive the test of the years.

* * *

A special place in Tolstoi's works is occupied by those writings in which he sought to point out the way to attainment of truth and human justice. Even in his early *Father Sergius* the writer searches fruitlessly for the answer to the ethical problems that obsessed him. How to live ? Were the sufferings of the people inevitable ? Was it not possible to re-shape the world ? Where was that lever with which it would be possible to change the direction of the world ?

Tortured by doubts, Tolstoi sought in vain for light. The hero of *Father Sergius* is an officer who turns away in disgust from the world, and enters a monastery. Failing to find peace of spirit even there, he finally loses his faith in everything.

The tragedy of the author is reflected most strongly in his *What are We to Do ?"* the pages of which literally drip blood. Describing the terrible sufferings of the people against the background of the wild extra-

vagance of the merchants and noblemen, Tolstoi strives to provide in it the answer to the most palpitating problems of life on the basis of religion: he turns to the Bible for the solution of the doubts that tortured him.

The various social classes of Russia replied in their own way to the question as to what was to be done. The bourgeoisie continued to live in luxury without the slightest "twinge of conscience." The revolutionary section of the peasantry and the working class prepared for an armed struggle with tsarism. The vast mass of the peasantry, which had yet not awakened to the need for revolution, as Lenin correctly pointed out, "wept and prayed, rationalized and dreamed, wrote petitions and sent deputations."

The ideologist of this latter social group was Tolstoi with his concept of ascetism, the simple life, the suppression of all desire, the repudiation of everything "earthly," non-resistance to evil, and inner self-perfection.

LENIN'S APPRAISAL OF TOLSTOI.

"Tolstoi is great," wrote Lenin, "as one who gave expression to the ideas and sentiments which had formed among the millions of the Russian peasants by the time of the bourgeois revolution in Russia." At the same time, however, he was pitiful and helpless when he sought to preach what, as Lenin said, was "one of the most despicable things on earth, namely, religion," which sought to "substitute for priests in government service, priests by moral conviction," and thereby cultivate the "most refined and hence the most repulsive of the priesthood."

Lenin's wrath was particularly strong against those of the Russian intellectuals who called themselves followers of Tolstoi but who presented a most disgusting spectacle of worn-out, hysterical snivelers who publicly beat themselves on the breast, crying : "I am vile, I am base, but I am morally perfecting myself ; I no longer eat meat and sustain myself solely on rice cutlets."

While paying tribute to the artistic genius of the author of *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina* and *Resurrection*, and recognizing the indisputably subjective nobility of Tolstoi as a man who fought all his life for the happiness of the people, Lenin and the Bolsheviks never made a fetish of him.

Tolstoi's theories of reconciliation and non-resistance are alien to the working people, for the latter know only too well that violence can only be destroyed by violence. For the working people of the whole world and for the Soviet people, the charm and power of the author lies not in his philosophy but in his magnificent writings, which give such splendid expression to life and which teach men to respect labor and to be humanists.

* * *

"In order to make his great writings really accessible to all, it is necessary to fight and fight again against such a social system which condemned millions and scores of millions to darkness, ignorance, hard labor and poverty, a socialist upheaval is necessary," is what Lenin wrote about Tolstoi.

The workers and peasants of Russia, under the leadership of the Bolsheviks, accomplished this Socialist upheaval, and all of the priceless legacy of the writer has become accessible to the people. Never has he had so many millions of readers as in the Soviet Union today. Scores of editions of his works have been published by the Soviet Government, but even the 17 million copies of his books published since the Revolution are not enough to satisfy the colossal demand.

Soviet writers study Tolstoi for his realistic method of portraying life, overlooking his socio-historical limitations. They learn from him how to present their heroes and events with the maximum expressiveness and how to master the beauties of the Russian language, full of colour and inner content. The great simplicity of his writings is a model for all Soviet literature.

The sole heir to all the wealth of the culture of the past, the working people include among their treasured possessions that literary legacy of Tolstoi, the great writer, humanist and fighter.

THE KANCHAN TREE*

Rabindranath Tagore

IN the playground where boys romped about
not a blade of grass could grow in the trampled dust.
There in a neglected corner a *kanchan* tree
stood uncompanioned in her reluctant refuge.
Beyond the enclosure the pariah dogs
gathered about the ditch
where leavings were thrown from the kitchen.
They snarled and howled and bit
and were querulously happy
in their own pursuit.
Our retriever Teddy in a fierce envy
fretted away her chained hours in the verandah,
loudly cursed her fate,
pulled at the chain in a vain endeavour
to join in a fray.

In the same mood of complaint the *kanchan*
seemed silently to despair alone on the indigent dust
away from her native green.
Her branches remained pointing towards the purple horizon
where the forest beyond the meadow
gave a hazy hint of a paradise.
At last the fateful springtime came
and when the neighbouring row of *sal* trees
spread its gracious shadow on the lawn,
the unseen courier of Death,
in the midst of an exuberant life,
sent creeping through the sap of the *kanchan*
a secret warning of her doom.

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* Translated from the original Bengali (*Punascha*, 1932) by Khitish Roy and revised by the Poet.—*Ed.*

The last ray flickered on the last green leaf,
and the frail *kanchan* challenged death
in a frantic overdraft on life,
bravely courting a final bankruptcy
in an exultation of a desperate squandering
of crowded clusters of flowers.
It ended in her destitute departure
with her last smiling salute
to the unfeeling indifference of the grey dust.

SAINT RAVIDAS*

(*Circa* 1400 A.C.)

Pandit Kshitimohan Sen

ALL India is now-a-days agitated over the case of the "Harijans." So pitiable, we are told, is their plight that we needs must at length bestir ourselves. So impoverished in spirit are they that, if you give them not forsooth, out of our spiritual abundance, they shall remain forever fallen. In this cry I hesitate to join, not because I look upon Harijans as beyond redemption, but owing to my doubts as to the atmosphere about our temples being such that entry therein will waft them upwards. Rather do I believe that if we could but follow in the footsteps of the saints who have again and again risen in India from amongst these very classes whom we now affect to patronise, then might we account ourselves fortunate indeed.

Unparalleled is the wealth of spiritual achievement gained by these saints of lowly social origin,—a wealth which attracted that best of Brahmins, Rāmananda, to renounce the proud privileges of his lordly caste. Leaving aside the names of southern India, less familiar in the north, who has not heard of the upper-Indian saints : Kabir, the weaver ; Ravidās, the cobbler ; Sadanā, the butcher ; Sena, the barber ; Dhannā, the Jath cultivator ; Nābhā, the scavenger ; Dādū, the cotton-ginner ; and a host of others of exalted life and teaching ? All these I revere as my spiritual Masters, and so cannot muster up the effrontery to offer salvation to the Harijans.

Kabir and his sayings are widely known ; it may even be said that he was the originator of the spiritual ferment that permeated the middle ages in India. But few are acquainted with the life-story of Ravidas, a fellow disciple with Kabir, of the same great master, Ramananda.

What is commonly known as history hardly takes account of such lives. When, in the course of conversation with a wandering Baül, I happened to deplore this fact, he, as is their custom, sang me this song :

> Dragged along the river bed at ebb, the boat leaves behind
> signs of its muddy passage.
> Not so the boat that sails over the brimming current, whereon
> no track, no trace is seen.1

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* Translated from the original Bengali by Sj. Surendranath Tagore.

১। খালের পেঁকে ঠেলে যখন নাও।
পিছের দিকে যে চিন থাকে তাতেই মেলে ভাও।
গহীন জলে পাল তুইল্যা নাও যায়।
পথের যে চিন কই বা মিলায়, কেমনে বা ভাও পায়॥

Indeed does the course of modern history concern itself mainly with the turbid careers of big plunderers and killers, recking nothing of those whose full-freighted lives, crossing over deep waters, have brought to humanity food for its civilisation.

Kabir was a born mystic ; spiritual progress came naturally to him ; he had no need to carve out a path. But those whose spiritual endeavour is on the ethical plane, they have to follow some definite course. So when devotees came to Kabir for guidance along the mystic way, he was at a loss how to advise them. All he had to say was :

> Path presupposes distance :
> If He be near, no path needest thou at all.[1]
>
> * * *
>
> Verily it maketh me smile
> To hear of a fish in water athirst![2]

And Kabir would refer them to Ravidas, saying :

> A saint among saints is Ravidas ;
> He's the one who knoweth all about the path.[3]

For Ravidas followed the path of the service of man. He knew only too well of the thorns that bestrew it, inasmuch as he had to remove them one by one in his progress. His attitude is summed up in his song :

> What loss if this body be torn to pieces ?
> Only fears Thy servant lest his love grow less.[4]

In his day there used to be frequent gatherings of pilgrims bent on the spiritual quest, and their numberless followers. On such occasions Ravidas

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१ । दूर अहै तो पन्थभी आहि ।
दूर नहीँ तो पन्थभी नाही ॥

२ । पानी बीच मीन पियासी ।
मोहिँ सुन सुन आवत हासी ।

३ । सन्तन मेँ रविदास सन्त है ।
पन्थ खबर सो ही जानै ॥

४ । कहा भइओ जउ तनु भईओ छिनु छिनु ।
प्रेमु जाइ तउ डरपै तेरो जनु ॥

would look after the old and decrepit, the women and children, with unwearied devotion. His youthful zeal brought fervent youths flocking round him to join in what he called "the five-old obeisance by way of service." But there was also something in Ravidas which brought even queens to his feet.

Though we have no precise historical proof, there is the tradition that Mira Bai, the Rani of undying spiritual lustre, had latterly become a disciple of Ravidas. Brought up in the traditional worship of Krishna, with the image of Giridhara-lal, Mira Bai, according to this account, came at a later stage of her development to sit at the feet of the cobbler-saint, who worshipped the Divinity of unmanifest form, and scoffed both at ritual and asceticism :

Where dost seek thy lamps for worship ?
Art not wonderstruck to behold the golden orbs in the sky,—
Eternal lamps that blaze forth His glory ?
Methinks the dull vision of the hermit reacheth not so far ![1]

* * *

Absorbed in meditation in the formless, colourless Being,
All rites, all methods, they disappear defeated.[2]

Perhaps it was her association with this saint of the outcastes which enraged the orthodox and compelled Mira Bai to leave the royal clans of father and husband, as she eventually did.

Jhali, the Rani of Chitor, is also reputed to have become a disciple of Ravidas. When the Brahmins complained of this to the Rana, he summoned the saint to come and meet their charges against him, whereupon Ravidas arrived in great trepidation calling upon the Lord to support His own

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१ । आरती कहाँ लौं जोवै ।
देखि महारती अचंभ होवै ॥
अनन्त कंचन दीप जलावै ।
जड़ वैराग दृष्टी न आवै ॥

२ । धरौं ध्यान अस सबल्यकारी ।
मन पवन सब जाय हारी ॥

. . . .

. . . .

कह रैदास निरंजन ध्याऔं ।

. . . .

cause,—and it was Ravidas who won the day, for the very sight of him captivated the Rana. The legend goes on to say that the Brahmins disdained to partake of the feast provided by the Rani, the cobbler's disciple ; but when they sat down to the meal they had cooked for themselves each pair saw Ravidas seated between them ! This vision brought down their pride, and the Brahmins came up to Ravidas, in their thousands, to accept him as their Master, averring that the sacred-thread of spiritual realisation was to be found beneath his skin.

In another story, indicating the simplicity of the life led by Ravidas, it is told that once a wandering ascetic, taking pity on his poverty-stricken appearance, made Ravidas a present of a touchstone. This gem Ravidas put away under the thatch of his cottage roof, and forgot all about it. When, after a year, the same ascetic came round again, it was to find Ravidas, working away at his shoe-making, outwardly as poor as ever !

In this Ravidas appears to have been of the same mind as Kabir who says :

> Sufficient be thy toilsome endeavour
> Thine own living to make, and help others as well.[1]

and he thankfully accepted from providence his daily reward of 5 gold pieces (as he called the gifts of his five senses). We may likewise surmise that the hidden treasure of the story, by means of which Ravidas was supposed to have built his rest-house for wayfarers, was but the wealth of devotion to toil and service which underlay his character.

These and other similar legends are to be found in the *Bhakti-rasa-bodhini*, compiled by Priyadas some three centuries later (in 1713 A. C.). A simpler and more definite view of the life and teaching of Ravidas may be gathered from his songs and sayings handed down through his immediate followers.

> How could this iron have become burnished gold
> Unless touched by the gem (*of divine grace*) ?[2]

This is what Ravidas himself says of the touchstone of the legend. Of the divinity of man he speaks in terms of his own trade :

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१ । कहैँ कबीर अस उद्यम कीजै ।
आप जीऐ औरन को दीजै ॥

२ । लोहा कंचन हिरण होई कैसे ।
जउ पारस नहिँ परसै ॥

Under the vast vault of blue
Lives the divinity clothed in hide.[1]

Mr. Macauliffe, the author of the well-known work on *Sikh Religion*, seems to have been misled by this into making the curious statement :

"He (Ravidas) afterwards built a hut, set up in it an idol which he made from a hide, and applied himself to its worship !"

Born and bred in the Chamar caste in those days of social narrowness and intolerance, it is wonderful to find Ravidas, on the one hand, pursuing unashamed his lowly trade, and, on the other illumined with so great a vision of man's high destiny. He does not hesitate to avow :

Low was I born—low in caste, in rank in trade.

. . . . .

Know, ye citizens, born am I of the caste known as Chamars,—
Ignorant, despised, carriers of carcasses to and fro.[2]

But that leaves him no doubt of the greatness of man's spiritual heritage :

By much merit have I earned this human birth.
Let it not be in vain, for lack of care.

. . . . .

Let not mine be the plight of the king
Who, asleep on his regal bed, dreamt he was a beggar.[3]

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१ । नीला गुम्मट उच्च विशाल ।
चरमी देव जीवत कमाल ॥

२ । जाती ओछा पाती ओछा
ओछा जनमु हमारा ॥

. . . .

नागर जना, मेरी जाती बिखियात चमारं ।
मेरी जाति कुटुम्बा ढला ढोर ढोवंता
नितई बाराणसी आसपासा ॥

३ । दुलभ जनमु पुंनफल पाईउ ।
बिरथा जात अविवेके ॥

. . . .

नरपति एकु सिंहासनि सोइया ।
सुपने भइया भिखारी ॥
आछत राज बिछुरत दुखु पाइया ।
सो गति भई हमारी ॥

His prayer was :

Fill, oh fill my cup with light,—
. . . . .
The light that's in sun and moon.
He who drinketh of the light before him,
What fear hath he of death ?[1]

It is interesting to find that even so long ago Ravidas had his vision of Utopia :

Begumpur is the city called :
No suffering of body or mind is there ;
No taxes, no impositions,
No accumulation, no possessions,
No oppression, no fear.
This is the city I have reached
Where welfare ever abides ;
O brother ! cries Ravidas, the Chamar,
All are my comrades who dwell therein.[2]

In view of such revolutionary sentiments of Ravidas, it is not surprising that he got into trouble with the ruling authorities and had to suffer persecution.

Ravidas was not one of those easy-going optimists who can see no evil in the world. He asks :

Where to get pure offerings for the worship of the Lord ?

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१ । देहु कलाली पूरण पियाला ।
. . . .
चंद सूर दोउ सनमुख होइ ।
पीयै प्याला मरै न कोई ॥
२ । बेगमपुरा सहर को नाउ ।
दुखु अंदोह नही तिहि ठाउ ॥
ना तसवीस खिराजु न मालु ।
खउफु न खता न तरसु जवालु ॥
अब मोहि खूब रतन गह पाई ।
ऊहाँ खैरि सदा मेरे भाई ॥
कंह रविदास खलास चमारा ।
जो हमशहरी सो मितु हमारा ॥

The milk is fouled in the teat sucked by the calf ;
The flower is fouled by the bee ; the water by the fish.
The snake nests in the sandal-wood tree,—
Everywhere are nectar and poison mingled together.[1]

His own answer is :

Yet if I offer up body and mind in reverence,
Through grace shall I reach Him who transcendeth all.[2]

And he says further :

What impels me thus to seek my Beloved ?—
The reason I am unable to tell.[3]

* * *

The touchstone awaits the iron ; mercy descends on the fallen and low.
Lowest of the low am I, Lord keep me ever at thy feet.[4]

Ravidas himself founded no institution, but of friends and admirers he had any number. Of these the foremost was Udhavdas ; a disciple of the latter, Birbhan, started a sect called *Sadh Sampradaya*, the society of saints, in a place called Bijeswar, to the north east of Rajputna. The members of this Society referred to God as *Satyanama*, Name of Truth, or True Name, whence they came to be known as the *Satnami* sect.

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१ । दुधु तो बछरै थनहु बिटारिओ ।
फुलु भंवरि जलु मीनि बिगारिओ ॥
भाई गोविन्द कहा लै चरावउ ।
अवरु फूलु अनुपु न पावउ ॥
मैला बैहै है भुइ-अंगा ।
बिखु अमृतु बसहि इक संगा ॥

२ । तनु मनु अरपउ पूज चरावउ ।
गुर परसादि निरंजन पावउ ॥

३ । बलि बलि जाउ रमइया कारणे ।
कारण कवन अबोल ॥

४ । पारस जोहै लोहकूँ ।
कृपा जोहै दीनहीन ॥
हौंसईं दीन हीन नहिँ ।
राखु चरणि निसदिन ॥

I have met many of these *Satnamis* in Allahabad, Mirzapur, and other places in the United Provinces. Their tenets are simple: faith in one God, devotion to truth, and *ahimsa*. The virtues they esteem are: reliance on God, simplicity and modesty. The vices they condemn are: theft and greed; falsehood, slander and rudeness. They have no belief in astrological divination. Their sacred book *Upadesa Pothi* is written in the vernacular. Men and women of the sect meet in the evening for discourses, readings and worship.

The songs of Ravidas that are chiefly current amongst them are those of the period of his passionate striving, when realisation was yet to come. These lose too much in translation, so I offer only a few examples:

Whom shall I tell of my agony,—how abide a life bereft of thee?
How shall the lover live at all forsaken by his beloved?[1]

* * * *

Unless Thou forsakest me, Thee I cannot leave,
Apart from Thee to whom else shall I cleave?
Thou art the mountain, I the peacock sporting on it;
Thou art the moon, I the *chakor* pining for its beams.
True is the love that bindeth me to Thee;
Tied with Thy love, from all other bonds am I free;
Whichever way I turn Thy service do I see;
Thou art my God, none other I know,
In adoring Thee, all fear of death I lose.
For love of Thee thus singeth poor Ravidas.[2]

१। कासनि बेदनि आखूँ।
हरि बिन जीव न रहै कस राखूँ॥

२। तुम न तोरहु तउ हम नहीं तोरहि।
तुम सिउ तोरि कवन सिउ जोरहि॥
जउ तुम गिरिवर तउ हम मोरा।
जउ तुम चन्द तउ हम भये है चकोरा॥
जउ तुम दीवरा तउ हम बाती।
जउ तुम तीरथ तउ हम जाती॥
साची प्रीति हम तुम सिउ जोरी।
तुम सिउ जोरी अवर संगि तोरी॥
जह जह जाउ तहा तेरी सेवा।
तुम सो ठाकुर अवरु न देवा॥
तुमरे भजन कटहि जम फाँसा।
भगति हेत गावै रविदासा॥

* * * *

Reveal Thyself, reveal Thyself,
Oh delay not to show Thyself to me.
Thy presence is my very life,
Without Thee to live I cannot bear.
Truly, truly, saith Ravidas, Thine own,
Hopeless is he unless Thou beest near.[1]

* * * *

Spring is all around thee to-day,
On every side blooms flower on flower ;
Away with this holding back of self.—
Plunge deep in love the livelong day.
The blossoms cling to the woodland trees,
Join thyself so to thy Beloved.
No withered dryness is to be seen,
Everywhere aboundeth the rising sap ;
Why then, Ravidas, dost hold aloof ?
Mingle thy being with the Beloved.[2]

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१ । दरसन दीजै दरसन दीजै ।
दीजै दरसन विलंब न कीजै ।
दरसन तोरा जीवन मोरा ।
बिन दरसन क्यों जीयै चकोरा ॥
तुम बिना अब सब झूठी आसा ।
सत सत भाषै जन रैदासा ॥

२ । आज बसन्त फूल फूल फूलै
बसन्त सब दिस ।
तजि कृपनाइ सब
डूबौ प्रेमि अहनिस ॥
आजु जागु व्यकुल मन मेरे
मिलहु प्रेम छहागु ।
तरु बन सब फूलत है
लागु पीतम संग लागु ॥
फीकी सूखी आज कहु नाहीं
आज सब रस उमंग ।
काहे उदास रविदास आज दिन
लागु लागु पिव संग ॥

The coming of realisation is heralded by the fading away of self :

> Where "I" remains, Thou art not ;
> When Thou comest, I am naught ![1]

And at length comes the triumphal challenge :

> When in the bonds of illusion I was tied,
> The ties of Thy love drew me out.
> Now that my freedom I've attained,
> Canst Thou be free from my bond of love ?[2]

१। जब हम होते तब तू नाही।
अब तो तू है मैं तो नाहीँ ॥

२। जउ हम बाँधि मोहफास हम
प्रेम बाँधनि तुम बाँधे।
अपने छुटनके जतन करहु
हम छुटै तुम आराधे ॥

SIR JAGADISH*

Rabindranath Tagore

WHEN by some fortunate chance I came into an intimate contact with Sir Jagadish he was in the prime of his youth and I was very nearly of his age. At that moment his mind seemed entranced with a vision of the living creatures' fundamental kinship with the world of the unconscious. He was busy in employing his marvellous inventiveness in coaxing the mute nature to yield her hidden language. The response which he received through skilful questionings revealed to him glimpses of the mystery of an existence that concealed its meaning underneath a contradiction of its appearance. I had the rare privilege of sharing the daily delight of his constant surprises. I believe, poets inherit the primeval age in their temperament when things in their infant simplicity revealed a common feature. Somehow these lovers of *Maya* feel the joy of their being spread all over the creation which makes them indulge in seeking the analogy of the living in things that appear lifeless. Such an attitude of mind may not in all cases be based upon any definite belief, animistic or pantheistic ; it may be merely a make-believe, as we notice in children's play which owes its origin to the lurking tendency in our sub-conscious mind to ascribe life-energy to all activities in the natural world. I was made familiar from my boyhood with the Upanishad which in its primitive intuition proclaims that whatever there is in this world vibrates with life, the life that is one in the infinite.

This might have been the reason of the eager enthusiasm with which I expected that the idea of the boundless community of life in the world was on the verge of a final sanction from the logic of scientific verification. Being allowed to follow Master's footsteps in the privacy of his pursuit, even though as a mere picker of his casual hints, I had my daily feast of wonders. At this early stage of his adventure when obstacles were powerfully numerous and jealousy largely predominated over appreciation, friendly companionship and sympathy must have had some needful value for him, even from one who to maintain intellectual communion with him lacked special competency. Yet I can proudly claim to have helped him in some of his immediate needs and occasional hours of despondency in those days of an inadequate recognition and feeble support that he received from the public.

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* Presidential address to be delivered at the Bose Institute, Calcutta (30th Nov., 1938), on the occasion of the first anniversary of the death of Sir Jagadish Bose, and published here by the kind permission of the Director of the Institute, Dr. D. M. Bose.—*Ed.*

In the background of that distant memory of mine I find not the slightest gleam of a vision of the enormous success that could before long combine scientific renown with a vast material means adequate enough to build this Institute, one of the very few richly endowed mediums in India for bestowing benediction of science upon his countrymen. In fact, it makes me laugh at myself today to read in some of my old letters my effort to encourage him with the likelihood of filling the gaps in his funds when my own resources were precariously limited to persuading friends who were foolish enough to have faith in me. Still it is comically sweet to think of the proud magnificence in my assurance, fitfully accompanied by contribution absurdly poor compared to the ceaseless flow of tribute that later on he could attract by his own magnetic personality and also by the general confidence he widely aroused in his genius. But I repeat again, it was sweet to have dreamed impracticable dreams and to have done however little it was possible, as it proves a courage of joy in the faith in greatness which itself is a bounteous gift to one's own mind.

However, ill equipped as I was by the deficiency in my training and by the poet's idiosyncrasy to be a fit companion to a man of science at a luminous period of his self-revelation, I was still accepted as his close friend and, possibly because of the contrariety in our natural vocations, I was able to offer some stimulation to his urge of fulfilment. Not having the necessary amount of vanity in my constitution, it had been the subject of constant wonder in my mind.

Since then time passed quickly, maturing the fruits of our expectation. During this period of his fast growing triumph I was modest enough to feel less and less the urgency of my comradeship in his journey towards the goal which was no longer arduous or beset with uncertainty. And yet I can rightfully claim the credit for strengthening in some measure his trust in his own destiny by adding to it my own unwavering faith, at that painfully hesitant moment of fortune during the dubious dawn of his career when even persons of meagre resources might have some important use.

Victory is the inalienable claim of all genuine power having the might of attraction that naturally exploits all kindred elements on its path and moulds them into an image of glory. And such an image is this Institute which represents Master's lifelong endeavour taking a permanent shape in the form of a centre for the inspiration of similar endeavours.

However, the early association of mine with Master's first great challenge of genius to his fate whose path at that time did not run smooth, belongs for me to a remote period of a history in which I feel myself hazily indistinct. And this made me seriously waver to accept the invitation for taking an honoured seat at a ceremonial meeting in this institution. The

presumptuousness of youth made me absurdly proud to imagine that my companionship was growing into an organic part in the history that was being evolved before my eyes and in that belief I did try to hearten the hero which was a part of my vanity. But foolish youth does not last for ever and I have had time to come to realise my limitation. Anyhow it is quite obvious, that I who am a mere poet carrying on my *sadhana* in the temple of language, the most capricious deity who is apt to ignore her responsibility to logic, often losing herself in the nebulous region of fantasy. Our oriental custom is to bring proper gifts to sacred shrine but my gift of words for this occasion cannot but be out of place among records of memorable proceedings of a learned society.

Fortunately there are some few men among us who can claim fellowship with the aristocracy in the realm of science, and can be expected to make splendid the ceremony with the wealth of their thoughts. I can only bless this Institution from that obscure distance where the multitude of the uncared-for generations of this country have helplessly drifted to the pitiless toil of primitive land-tilling. I offer my salutation to the illustrious founder of this Institute, humbly sitting by those who are deprived of a sufficiency of that knowledge which only can save them from the desolating menace of scientific devilry and from the continual drainage of the resources of life, and I appeal to this Institute to bring our call to science herself to rescue the world from the clutches of the marauders who betray her noble mission into an unmitigated savagery.

LETTER FROM A CONTRIBUTOR

To

The Editor,

The Visva-Bharati Quarterly,

Santiniketan.

Sir,

In your editorial disclaimer to M. Guénon's article on "The Fifth Veda"* and my Foreword to it, with which of course, as such, I have no quarrel, you say : "the Editor wishes it to be clearly understood that the views and theories adopted in the above article or in the foreword to it are entirely their authors'." I am convinced that it was not your intention to depreciate these "views and theories," but it is clear, from this and your concluding sentence, that there is a certain misunderstanding of their true nature, and this results in an underrating of them which, however unconscious it may be, is not the less real on that account. The claim of M. Guénon and myself is that these ideas are strictly traditional in character, and, like all that is strictly traditional, are based upon absolute metaphysical certainties. As such they can have nothing hypothetical about them whatsoever, nor indeed be of individual origin at all. This being the case it will be understood that however flattering it may be to us to have them attributed entirely to ourselves, it is in open contradiction with our claims, and can therefore cause us not the least gratification. Before these "views and theories" can be ranked as hypotheses, which in their nature can only be of human origin, and put on the same level as the philosophy and the "profane" science of the West, whose hypothetical character is their distinctive mark, it must first be shown that what we claim for them is unfounded. My quarrel then, since you make an assimilation of this kind, is not with your intentions, I assure you,—I am convinced that they are nothing if not honourable—but with the simple fact that what should first be proved is tacitly assumed. I shall accordingly be grateful if you will allow me space to point out that for M. Guénon and myself the assumption, tacit or otherwise, is inadmissible.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
David Mac Iver.

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* See Vol. III, Part 2, page 107.

REVIEWS

INDIAN AND WESTERN PHILOSOPHY : A Study in Contrasts—
by Dr. Betty Heimann, Ph. D., Lecturer in Sanskrit and Indian
Philosophy in the School of Oriental Studies, University
of London (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd.
London, 1937). Price 5*s*. net.

THIS is a recent work on the comparative study of Indian and Western Philosophical ideas coming from a present-day eminent Indologist. It embodies, or rather is based on as the author states in the Preface, the Forlung Fund Lectures delivered in 1936 under the auspices of the Royal Asiatic Society, as a special course at the School of Oriental Studies, University of London. The book does not offer what may be called a systematic presentation of the Thought, either of India or of Europe, but a comparative review of the fundamental principles underlying the Philosophy and Religion of, the East and the West, as understood and interpreted by her. As such, it may be regarded as a fresh contribution to the comparative studies on the subject, undertaken by eminent thinkers of the day both in India and Europe, and also to some extent in America.

But the present contribution, made in the little volume under review, appears to be somewhat unique in its mode of treatment of the subject. The author herself states, both in the Introduction and the Epilogue, what her special aim was in undertaking the writing. In the very first paragraph of the Introduction, she states : "My aim, however, is not to elaborate any finished outline of all the philosophical conceptions that have arisen in the East and West up to the present day, but merely to indicate the essential and fundamental tendencies and principles."

Again, in the Epilogue :

"The object of my comparative Study is of course not simply to indicate certain traits in the cultural systems of East and West which may occasionally and, as it were, accidentally resemble each other in one way or the other. Rather have I striven to stress the necessity for moving on two different planes simultaneously, thus widening our view and at the same moment approaching more closely the *Santa-rasa* in the historical sense of the *Rajatarangini*, surveying, that is to say, the oncoming and receding waves of events with unmoved spirit."

From the quotations above it will appear what the purpose of the author has been in undertaking the writing. She has laid down, to start with, what she considers to be the underlying essential nature of the two movements of thought. And she finds fundamental contrasts there, calling

the European as *anthropological* and the Indian as *Cosmic*, using the terms in senses peculiarly her own. The method adopted preeminently to present the contrasts is rather philological, interpreted philosophically. In taking up this method she appears to be continuing the line of procedure started by her own illustrious country-man, the late Professor Max Muller, who may be regarded as the father of Modern Philology of Indo-Aryan Languages.

The subjects treated of in the different chapters to indicate the contrasts are many : Theology, Ontology and Eschatology, Ethics, Logic, Aesthetics, History and Applied Science, ending in the last chapter with some discussions about the present-day apparent rapprochement between the two lines of thought, mainly philosophical and religious. Under the subjects, there are so many problems handled by way of comparison and contrast between the East and the West that it is not possible to do even fair justice to her treatment in either way of all of them. An idea of the nature and number of these problems can be had from the Indices A and B to the book, particularly from the latter. All that is possible to do within the scope of this review is to point out and discuss the general topics and fundamentals, as indicated by the author in the course of the work.

But before this is done, it would not be, it is hoped, out of place here, to say something regarding the method adopted by the author, namely, philologico-philosophical. This method can hardly be said to be adequate, or the right one, for philosophical studies, particularly of the ancient thought. There is, first of all, no agreement about the original meanings of the terms used in the philosophical systems, whether Eastern or Western. Secondly, the method neglects the fact of development or of alteration, in course of time, in the meanings of words, so much so that it is often difficult to trace any similarity between what may be considered to have been the original sense and the later use of the terms. Again the similarity, if any, where it is suspected to exist, is so faint and far to seek that it is almost hopeless to try to base later sense on the supposed original use of a term. Besides, philology, like grammar, is a later study in the development of a language, and it is often difficult to trace out the original meaning. Even if traced, the developed conceptions the terms come to stand for cannot be adequately and successfully expressed by the method. The Index C to the book, where attempts have been made, by the author, to explain certain Sanskrit philosophical terms in a new and peculiar way will furnish instances to illustrate what I mean to say here. The meanings established philologically are not all and in every case warranted by their actual use in the Indian systems of Philosophy.

In the Introduction the author begins by mentioning what she considers to be the fundamental trend of thought in the East and West. This

conclusion, she asserts, is the result of her careful studies of the two movements of thought, pursuing the philological-philosophical method and taking a wide review of the historical development of the two lines of thought in India and Europe. Indian thought is mainly cosmological, and the European mainly anthropological. This way of characterisation under a single category of the whole movements of thought and the sphere of philosophical ideas is no doubt a very bold one. The consequence has been that she has had to strain the meaning, both denotatively and connotatively, of the terms by which she designates the two categories, in order to fit them into various philosophical systems and ideas. And she does not appear to be very explicit in defining the terms : no clear and definite ideas are conveyed by them. Even supposing that they stand for some definite ideas in the mind of the author, the very attempt to bring all the systems and the thoughts they embody under a single principle is rather too sweeping a way of interpretation which is bound to be unsatisfactory. The whole method appears to be *a priori* and consequently it fails to meet all the phases of the two movements of thought. The author has no doubt tried to illustrate her ideas in the different chapters dealing with the different phases of Indian thought as contrasted with the European. But the manner in which she has done this does not appear to do adequate justice to the topic treated. They have either been incompletely stated or misrepresented. To go into details for illustrations would make this review unnecessarily lengthy. One who is well-acquainted with the various movements of Indian and European thought and feels interested in the comparative study undertaken in the present work would do well to go through the whole book in a critical but impartial manner.

There is one thing, however, which one must admire about the author. She has maintained throughout an impersonal and objective attitude in the treatment of the subjects and discussions about them. She is neither prejudiced against nor partial to either of the two movements of thought contrasted. They are rather treated as complementary to each other, but they are not exhaustive. There is the possibility of other new trends coming up in course of time, which may fulfil the defects of the two. And the author concludes hopefully with these words at the end of the Epilogue : "There is no reason whatever to assume that these two quasi-biological systems, the anthropological and the cosmic, are the only possible centres which the human mind has hitherto been able, or will be able in future, to develop productively and consistently."

In the last chapter of the book, the author discusses at length the present-day tendencies towards what she calls a rapprochement of the East

and West in the philosophical field. Indian thought is being influenced and modified by the inrush of Western ideas, and the European thought is showing signs, here and there, of being touched with the Indian. But she thinks, as a result of the discussions, that this rapprochement, where it appears, is rather superficial and apparent than real. It does not go deep into the characteristic trend of the two divergent lines of thought, which are so fundamentally different that they can never permanently and essentially meet or modify each other. This position she asserts at the end of the chapter in these words : "We seem driven to conclude, therefore, that the divergent lines of West and East belong to wholly different planes, so that even if they sometimes appear to converge, still they will never meet."

This is virtually a repetition, from a different standpoint, of the oft-quoted slogan of Kipling's about the East and West never meeting. Read in connection with this poetic remark of the late Anglo-Indian writer, what Dr. Rudolf Otto states at the very beginning of his masterly work on Mysticism. The view-points are totally different and opposite. This is because, I think, Dr. Otto has taken a deeper view of human nature at its spiritual level, where is presented curiously a common background of religious experience. There should be no wonder that it is so. For the differences that appear in the speculative and religious ideas of different peoples are due mostly to extraneous circumstances, partly historical and partly conventional. These touch only the surface of human nature, leaving unaffected a deeper common core underlying the appearances. There can therefore be no racial difference or antagonism at this higher and deeper level. It is for this reason that there is always the possibility of cultural assimilation by one people of another. And the curious thing about this is, as indicated positively in the history of cultural movements, that the higher level of culture influences and modifies the lower more than the reverse. In consideration of this fact, it would be going against both historical evidence and essential human nature to assert with confidence, as the present author has done, that there can be no rapprochement between the East and West. This division of East and West is geographical (and partly political) rather that human or even racial. Humanity is one at its core. This is apt to be often forgotten even by philosophers themselves in a comparative study of the thoughts of a people other than their own.

P. B. Adhikari.

ROERICHANA :

(1) Zelta Gramata—Published, Riga, 1938 ;
(2) Nicholas Roerich—A Master of the Mountains
—by Barnett D. Conlan (Published by
Flamma, Inc. U. S. A.).

NICHOLAS ROERICH'S name has become a tradition : it is a name which indicates a pervasive way of mind, in art, literature, and in the realm of meditation. When a personality becomes the centre and the symbol for a philosophy of life, and draws around it kindred spirits from all the world over, the reviewer must stand aside and merely direct others to testimonies that record direct experiences initiated.

Zelta Gramata is a record of such testimonies ; it contains a harvest of appreciation from scholars, artists, critics and from other distinguished men of many countries and continents. The wealth of friendly tributes collected "in dedication to fifty years of creative activity of Nicholas Roerich," is further enhanced by association with the First Baltic Congress of Roerich Societies held in Riga on October 10th, 1937. Then again, there is the wholly unexpected joy of finding several reproductions in colour from the paintings of Roerich himself ; this graceful volume takes you from pages of thought to visions of entrancing loveliness.

Having myself made the pilgrimage to the mountain on which *Urusvati* is built, I can recommend Conlan's book with particular warmth of gratitude. With much knowledge and spiritual sensitiveness the author introduces you to "A Master of the Mountains," and succeeds in the difficult task of interpreting the many-sided unity of Roerich's genius. The formative period of a mind destined to move men is always of surpassing interest, and yet is often denied insightful study : this short account, however, manages to give a very satisfying glimpse into Roerich's early period. We are told of Roerich's excavating zeal when at the age of fourteen he began digging up some tumuli on his father's estate near—as it was then—St. Petersbourg. His preoccupation with the Past and early observations on remote Neolithic consciousness, and on various aspects of "primitive" mind and culture are of unique interest. After this it is not difficult to understand that Roerich inspired one of the greatest of modern composers—Stravinsky—to produce that landmark of music, "Le Sacre du Printemps" (The Rite of Spring) in which a panoramic parallel to some of Roerich's great Tibetan pictures can be found. Mysterious figures move with flute and drum and cymbal ; in different media the coloured clouds, witnessing mountains, vast silences and

zones of feeling are set against an inward glow. Roerich having struck upon tangible Eastern mysticism has drawn from living sources in a manner denied to Stravinsky. But that is by the way. Scriabine's music, the author thinks, is nearer to Roerich's art, and there are affinities, as one would expect, with a whole realm of creative spirits. Conlan shows Roerich in the context of a questing culture—and this is important—a rich European urge which thriving on indigenous roots contacted varied tendencies and threw up the Russian Ballet, Diaghilew; the arts of Matisse and Picasso ; . . .Roerich's paintings. A friend of Gorky (both of them were spiritually allied to the great drive of new Soviet civilization) Roerich combines Russian culture with something intrinsically Eastern—or is it a case of essential continuity ? —and the road of fate leads to such canvases as The Commands of Rigden Djapo, one of the guide-posts in Roerich's art. Readers must make that pilgrimage and I hope some of them will be led, as the reviewer was, to follow the easier path to the Roerich hermitage along the Kulu valley, past Katrain, to the corner of Naggar where the seer sits rapt in reverie facing the everlasting snowy wall of the Himalayas.

Amiya Chakravarty.

SHAKESPEARE CRITICISM : An Essay in Synthesis.
By Narayana Menon (Oxford University Press, 1938.)

MR. MENON'S book is not only a collection of very useful literary material ; it represents an interesting and successful attempt in the revaluation of Shakespeare's work and criticism. Mr. Menon is right in calling it "An essay in synthesis" : for he has tried to penetrate into Shakespeare's art by means of a synthetic interpretation, which embraces the writer, the tragic hero, the actor, and the spectator alike and which rejects as inadequate once for all the historical and the analytical methods in Shakespeare Criticism. His angle of vision, therefore, is not "new" : he does not apply the theories of the psycho-analysts, the sociologists, or the economists to Shakespeare's work. His view is synthetical and therefore all-embracing : there is no place for some particular "theory" ; such an angle of vision must necessarily be indiscriminate as well : therein lies the charm and the deficiency of Mr. Menon's book.

The indiscriminate selection and use of critical statements and appreciations make his book appear at times incoherent and the reader will have to ask himself more than once what it is exactly that M. Menon wishes to communicate to him. Sometimes there is a new and startling idea, but when the author tries to develop it "synthetically," he seems to lose himself

in a hopeless intellectual muddle ; for instance : "A book is a direct expression of values. Society arises when men and women are brought up in an environment emphasizing certain values and literature provides such an environment" (p. 10). Does that mean that literature is responsible for the creation of societies ? Or : "A great book is the Holy communion . . . Shakespeare, who has already crossed national frontiers, may yet do more for international peace than the League of Nations" (Ibid.). Does the author not realize that critics in their arbitrary interpretation of Shakespeare will not hesitate to use those intellectual and other weapons which would make literary and other "peace" impossible ? These statements are devoid of all plain meaning, as they cannot be applied to any reality at all. Fortunately, however, in the middle and later part of the book, M. Menon is less liberal with his general appreciations.

It is in Mr. Menon's analysis of the "imaginative identification" between the spectator and the tragic hero (chap. III.), his attacks against the historical and analytical method (chap. VII), and his theory of a dynamic response to tragedy (see chaps. IX to XV), that his approach to Shakespeare in terms of synthesis becomes elucidating and essentially convincing. There must be identification between spectator and tragic hero in order to make this dynamic response possible. This identification takes place, according to Mr. Menon, on an emotional rather than intellectual basis. It is we who are Hamlet, Antonius, Brutus ; but, on the other hand, there is no "objective" Ophelia, Cleopatra, Caesar ; we do not see them as they are, but through the eyes of the hero. Only if we reach this conclusion "imaginative identification" begins to mean something deeper. It is a complete abandonment of one's own personality in favour of that of the tragic hero. Imaginative identification and dynamic response are one and cannot be separated. They, in their turn, make a "synthesis of criticism" possible. And nothing is more refreshing than Mr. Menon's attacks against irrelevant analytical and historical criticism. Will our response to Hamlet be in any way different, if we know somethig about his political theories ; will it be easier for us to identify ourselves with Lady Macbeth, if we know how many children she had ; will our response to Cleopatra's character (as seen through Antonius' eyes) be influenced by the possible and supposed colour of her nose-ring ? The frankness with which Mr. Menon deals with "critical" questions of this kind is representative of a new method and outlook in Shakespeare Criticism. His book deserves the attention not only of scholars interested in Shakespeare Criticism, but of all students of literature.

A. Aronson.

SYMPHONY OF PEACE : by Baldoon Dhingra.
(Bowes & Bowes, Cambridge, 1938.)

THE fourteen poems by Mr. Dhingra which constitute his "Symphony of Peace" belong as regards their form and their contents to the Romantic tradition in English poetry. They are permeated by that kind of idealism which we usually associate with the late Romantics and the Victorian period in England . If, therefore, from a conventional point of view, we find these poems worthy of high praise, from the point of view of critical appreciation and literary revaluation they seem to lack in that dynamic vitality which only the very great and the very few modern English poets possess. The apparent easiness and gracefulness of the metaphors and the imagery may mislead the reader into believing that "poetic sensitiveness and love of beauty" are sufficient for the making of a poet. There are, however, no other tests, no other standards for the appreciation of modern poetry than those emanating from an adequate and relevant expression of a realized experience. To realize an experience is—in the case of a poet—to transform it into language entirely new and his own, into something that vitally concerns anybody who may experience the same thing, in short, into something communicable. The all absorbing desire of every modern poet to be "sincere," does not always prevent him from being conventionally passive about his experience, from expressing in an unrealized and unconvincing way those emotions which slumber in the heart of everybody and which only need a truly great poet to be "actualized" and related to some deep experience.

If, therefore, we feel that most of Mr. Dhingra's poems are divorced from experience, it is not to say that he is insufficiently high-brow and sophisticated, but that he is concerned with his experience in a somewhat passive, non-committal, and static way ; it is, in fact, this way of producing poetry which those among the moderns who have got something to say have rejected as inadequate and irrelevant for the expression of our own chaotic and essentially disturbed world. Therefore any criticism of Mr. Dhingra's poems should be concerned not with his poetic "form" (the form of these poems is excellent, no doubt), but with his attitude to things—which is too consciously "poetic" and idealistic, and not sufficiently aware of the revaluation of standards and values in our own time. It is in this test of awareness that Mr. Dhingra's poems fail to convince.

A few of his images, similes, and metaphors will elucidate this point. There is an almost diconcerting overflow of "sincere" but unrealized images in the first few poems, such as : "sacrament of sunshine", "earth's unyielding face", "the sad and spectral moon" (sic !), "the radiant throng of

gods and peerless maids", "comet of my life" ; or this stanza from the poem entitled "Her life was like a haunting tune":

"The hair was gold, like bracken dead
In sunlight, when the wind has stirred ;
The elfin music in her voice
Made magical each word".

These instances are the best illustration to our argument, namely, that perfect "form" and sincerity do not guarantee poetic sensitiveness and awareness.

A. Aronson.

THE ADVAITA-SIDDHI WITH THE GURU CHANDRIKA—Vol. II.

Published by the University of Mysore in 1937 under the Oriental Library Publications— Sanskrit series, No. 78.

WE are very glad to welcome the long-expected publication of the second volume of the *Advaita-siddhi* with the extensive learned gloss (vyakhya)— called *Guru Chandrika*. The first volume of the same work came out in 1933. The interval between the two publications is rather too long. However, the present issue is welcome as it comes. The Mysore University has no doubt placed the ardent students of Sankara-vedanta under a deep gratitude by the publication of the valuable gloss, which hitherto remained unavailable to them. The promise, as given in the Preface to the first volume of the series, was that the first chapter of the original work would be completed in the second. But we find that this has not been done. There are still 19 topics of the first chapter, which stand over to be included in the next volume. It is hoped that the issue of the third volume in the series will be undertaken at an early date, and the completion of the whole work effected within a reasonable span of time without long intervals like the one that has occurred between the first two.

The publication, as it has appeared in the two volumes, is commendable. The paper and the printing are both good, and the general get-up is far better than is usually found in the issue of sanskrit works. The undertaking, though conducted by learned editors with careful comparison of four different manuscripts, is not still free from misprints. Only we are glad to find that the number of pages devoted to the list of *Errata* has been reduced considerably in the present volume : it covered ten pages in the first ; it takes now a single page. It is hoped that more care will be given, in future volumes, to this point, which is absolutely necessary in the publication of older sanskrit works.

Now a few statements would not be, it is hoped, out of place here

about the original work and its two glosses (vyakhyas), which both go by the common name *Chandrika*—one being called *Guru* and the other *Laghu*. The original work is the *Advaita-siddhi*, which treats diatectically of a number of topics arising in connection with the monistic position of Sankara-vedanta. This treatment was undertaken by the learned author, Madhusudana Saraswati, specially on account of the attacks on the position which came from that of the so-called Dualistic Vedanta of the Madhva sehool. In particular, the *Advaita-siddhi* may be regarded as a refutation of the position of the latter school as embodied in the work called *Nyayamrita* by Vyasatirtha of the school, in which the author has criticised the monistic position by way of indirect defence of his own. But the quarrel did not cease here. A fresh attack came on the very defensive attitude of *Advaita-siddhi* in another work, called *Nyayamrita-Tarangini* or simply *Tarangini* by Ramatirtha or Ramacharya of the antagonistic school. The learned author, Madhusudana, was not alive, when this objection came to his masterly work, or he would have undertaken a similar but more effective retort on the author of the Tarangini. This task was, therefore, undertaken by his disciples, among whom are the two notable authors of the two *Chandrikas*—the worthy *chelas* of the worthy *Guru*.

There is some difference of opinion, however, about the authorships of the two *Chandrikas*. The *Laghu Chandrika* is, by common consent, ascribed to the learned member of the Advaita-school of Madhusudana—Brahmananda Saraswati or simply Gauda Brahmananda. But this accredited author himself states in a colophon at the end of the last chapter of his *Laghu Chandrika* that Shivaramavarni is the real author (*karta*) of the work, and that he is but the writer (*lekhaka*). This Shivaramavarni might have been the guru of Brahmananda, and so M. M. Ananta Krishna Sastri, in the introduction to his edition of the *Advaita-siddhi* with the *Laghu Chandrika* and other glosses, thinks that this honour given by the latter to the former was out of high reverence for him. The *Guru Chandrika*, is the larger work, written on the same lines and for the same purpose, namely the refutation of the author of *Tarangini*, and is ascribed to the authorship of Shivaramavarni. This is the position adopted by Sastriji. But in the Preface to the first volume of the work under review we find again that both the *Chandrikas* are referred to the hand of the same author,—Brahmananda, and that the *Guru Chandrika* is the earlier work. But this interpretation of the text, quoted in the foot-note, is rather a forced one, not borne out by the quoted text. In the circumstances, it seems reasonable to agree with Sastriji's opinion, namely, that the authorship of the two works belongs to two different writers : *Guru Chandrika* to Sivaramavarni and *Laghu Chandrika* to Brahmananda Saraswati. For it passes our understan-

ding why the same author should be writing two works on the same subject. The colophon referred to above may be interpreted as implying that the larger work—*Guru Chandrika*—was due to Sivaramavarni (the Guru) ; he (Brahmanda) only followed his lines in writing the *Laghu Chandrika*—the shorter gloss. As a matter of fact, on perusal of the two *Chandrikas*, it is found that the latter work is comparatively simpler in style and contains lesser subtleties in argumentation than the larger one. Hence the name *Guru* (heavy) prefixed to the latter treatise appears to be really an apt one by the side of other treatise called *Laghu* (light). However, both are worth proper studies by one undertaking the serious task of study and understanding of the more difficult original—the *Advaita-siddhi*.

The *Laghu Chandrika* was published for the first time by Mahamahapadhyaya Pandit Ananta Krishna Sastri Vedantavisarada, with its gloss (nirukti) by Vitthalesopadhyaya, in his valuable edition of *Advaita-siddhi* which came out in the Nirnayashagara Press, Bombay, in 1917. This edition contains also, though incompletely, another gloss (vyakhya) called *Siddhi-vyakhya* by Balabhadra and a learned Introduction by the editor himself which, besides expounding in a simple and brief manner the fundamental position of the monistic vedanta (Advaita-vada), gives also some valuable information regarding the subject matter of the different glosses and their authors. It is a pity that the exposition (nirukti) by Vitthalesa and the gloss (vyakhya) by Balabhadra are not carried even to the end of the first chapter of the original work, the *vyakhya* stopping at the 9th and the nirukti at the 10 of the 60 topics of the chapter. The reason might be that they were not available. The *Laghu Chandrika* is, however, continued up to the completion of the work. There is another notable feature of this publication, namely, that after the discussions on each topic undertaken, there is a summary statement of the position of *Nayamrita* as also of *Tarangini* given at the end with the refutation of the position by the author of the *Advaita-siddhi* and *Laghu Chandrika* respectively. This feature indicates clearly the origin of the works—the *Siddhi* and their glosses—(the two *Chandrikas*).

P. B. Adhikari.

THE GANDHI SUTRAS : By D. S. Sarma, M. A., Principal, Pachaiyappa's College, Madras. Pp. 152. Price : Rs. 1/8/-.

GANDHIJI is an apostle of Satyagraha which, according to the author, "is nothing but spiritual aero-nautics." His greatness in the modern machine- and militarism-ridden world consists, however, in applying the laws of this science of the spirit to the solution of the problems of mankind so that the hidden divinity in human beings may be more and more revealed.

The aim of his book, says Principal Sarma, "is the modest one of

giving his (Gandhiji's) teaching the traditional form of the teachings of the other great sages of India who have preceded him and who have made Hinduism what it is." And he hastens to add that Hinduism "is a progressive realization of Truth."

This aim has been achieved by condensing the teaching of Gandhiji into 108 *sutras* or mnemonic formulae, each of which is in Sanskrit and is followed by an English translation thereof, together with relevant extracts from his speeches and writings to serve as appropriate commentary. These *sutras* have been divided into three chapters ; (a) the general principles, (b) Satyagraha and (c) its twin offsprings : Non-cooperation and Civil Disobedience. Here is an example of Principal Sarma's *original* technique :—

Sutra : Premaive param rupamahimsayah.

Translation : Love is indeed the highest form of non-violence.

Commentary : *Ahimsa* is not mere killing. A person who remains smugly satisfied with the non-killing of noxious life but has no love in his heart for all that lives will be counted as least in the Kingdom of Heaven. True love is boundless like the ocean, and rising and swelling within one spreads itself out and crossing all boundaries and frontiers envelops the whole world (p. 31).

The Gandhi Sutras is a unique book. It is a gospel of Pure Non-violence or Love and, as such, is, in every way, eminently suitable for being used as a manual for individual as well as corporate conduct of life.

G. M.

JAINISM IN NORTHERN INDIA (*Uttar Hindusthan man Jaindharma*) : By Chimanlal J. Shah. M. A. (Longmans Green & Co. Ltd., Bombay. Price : Rs. 5/- pp. 232).

THIS is a Gujrati translation of the author's original thesis in English on Jainism in Northern India, covering the period from 800 B.C. to 526 A. D., which competent critics at the time of its publication in 1932, declared as a valuable addition to standard research studies into the historical background and basis of the religion of Mahavir. The inclusion of a number of illustrations and a detailed bibliography on the subject has further enhanced the usefulness of the book for the students of Jainism.

G. M.

RAGHUNATH BHAGAVAD-GITA : by Swami Raghunath Rai, M. A. (Gita Pracharani Sabha, Sevakunj, Karachi. Paper Binding, Rs. 3/8/-, Cloth Rs. 5/-).

WHILE reading this metrical exposition in Hindi of the *Bhagavad-Gita,* I have been reminded over and again of Tulsidas' *Ramayana.* It is an illuminating interpretation of the abstruse truths of the *Gita* in the everyday

language and logic of the common people of the North. There are no doubt scores of Hindi translations of the *Gita* already available in the book market, but Swami Raghunath Rai's rendering is unique, inasmuch as it is a creation and not a mere commentary. Its simplicity of explanation, illustration and expression is its outstanding attribute, and this the seer-singer has achieved as a result of his passing the philosophical thesis of the original through the alembic of his own insight. For these reasons the book, under review, is bound to become, before long, the Bible of the family in the Hindi-knowing provinces.

The Sanskrit scholars may find fault with the system of spellings, adopted by the interpreter, but it serves admirably the purpose in view; namely, to spell the words in the light of what the peoples' ears are familiar with. The verse-forms employed are various, chief among these being the *Chaupai* and the *doha*. The get-up and printing of the book have left nothing to be desired.

J. P.

GUIDE THROUGH THE ABHIDHAMMA-PITAKA : by Nyanatiloka (D. B. Taraporevala Sons & Co., Hornby Road, Fort, Bombay).

Price Rs. 6/-.

It is held by the Theravādin Sect of Buddhists that the whole collection of the *Tipiṭaka* in Pali are direct teachings of the Buddha and that they have been preserved orally and otherwise from very ancient time. But dispute arose among Buddhists even at an early period with regard to the authenticity of the Abhidhamma, the third collection of the *Tipiṭaka*; Sautrāntikas, for example, rejected it on the ground that it was composed by some disciples and not by the Buddha himself. Since the record of the first council completely ignores to mention the *Abhidhamma* in the list of recited books, we have to suspect whether it formed part of the actual teachings of the Buddha. Theravādins, however, strongly contend that it *did* so.

We learn from the Chinese and Tibetan sources that there is a collection of Books, called *Abhidhamma* along with other collections of Sūtras and Vinayas, which all constitute the Sacred Scriptures of the Sarvāstivādins and other schools of early Buddhism. And these collections are reported to be independent in origin of those in Pali, although they in some cases correspond to the latter. Thanks to the labours of Mr. Rhys Davids and other scholars, almost all books of the Scriptures in Pali have been critically edited and published. But as regards the Scriptures which remain buried

in Chinese and Tibetan translations, little effort has been hitherto made either in Europe or in India to study them systematically and to bring to light their contents.

The whole collection of *Tipiṭaka* in Pali as we have at present, exceeds 50 volumes, and so it is quite necessary to have their contents so condensed that even a superficial reader can easily understand what each section of the Scriptures teaches us. The attempt has already been made in this direction by E. J. Thomas in his book, *The Life of Buddha*, Appendix, where he has indicated in brief the subject matter of each sutta. But the *Abhidhamma* books need a careful treatment by an expert hand on account of their important subjects of philosophic nature, such as psychology and phenomenology.

Rev. Nyanatiloka, the learned Buddhist scholar of Germany, has fittingly undertaken this task and succeeded in admirably summing up in the volume under review all the important topics dealt with in the 7 books of the *Abhidhammapiṭaka*.

The *Dhammasaṅgiṇī*, the first and earliest of the 7 *Abhidhamma* books deals with the Buddhist psychology proper. This book together with the seventh one, *Paṭṭhāna*, "constitutes the quintessence of the entire Abhidhamma." In the first part of the book we find on the whole 89 states of consciousness, grouped into three main categories, *kusala*, *akusala* and *avyākhata*, which again are distributed among the four spheres of existence, *kāma*, *rūpa*, *arūpa* and *lokuttara*. A useful table has been drawn and annexed with all necessary details regarding these points. The last book, *Paṭṭhāna*, deals with the dependent origination of all phenomena of existence. It is very important for fully understanding the doctrine of *Paṭicca-samuppāda* in all aspects.

Rev. Nyanatiloka has skilfully summarised the whole contents of these *Abhidhamma* books and reproduced in some cases the most important portion of the texts in such manner that any student who goes through all these pages, will easily grasp the fundamental teachings of the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*. Besides, he has given in some places his own suggestions on some important points (pp. 21, 58, 60). On p. 60 it has been suggested that "vaitulya" (vetulyaka) is a distortion of "vaipulya." But there appears little possibility of phonetically changing "t" into "p" or *vice versa*.

In his learned Essay on Paṭiccasamuppāda, which forms Appendix to the book, the author tries to explain elaborately the Buddhist Doctrine of Causality that had, in his opinion, never been really understood by anyone in the West. The Essay has been prepared mainly from the Pali sources, *Visuddhimagga* and other works. In it the full import of each link of causation (nidāna) and its possible relations with 24 modes of conditions

(paccaya) are briefly set forth. It is gratifying to note that the author has promissed to bring about a most elaborate edition of the Essay with fuller details on the subject in future. We may point out here that it will be highly valuable and interesting, if he consults in preparing the promised edition, the Sanskrit sources, especially the *Śālistamba-sūtra* where each link of chain of causation is explained in almost identical terms as in Pali sources, though not in relation with the 24 modes of conditions as well.

The book is well printed and well got up. Apparently no need was felt by the author to add a correction slip. I, however, noticed the following errors which may be corrected. Read 'sd' for '5d' on the table (annexed after p. 12) column 4, and at the bottom 'Abbreviation'; and also read "with" for "within" on p. 90, and "imbecility" for "imbecillity" on p. 139.

It is hoped that any student of the Abhidhamma lore will find in this book a helpful and instructive guide.

N. Aiyaswami Sastri.

MINA : A Hindi translation of Lessing's German drama *Mina Von Barnhelm*, by Dr. Mangal Dev Shastri. Published by Hindustani Academy, Allahabad. Re. 1/-.

As I sit to review this Hindi translation of Lessing's *Mina Von Barnhelm*, the whole history of the growth of modern Hindi language and literature during the past few decades comes vividly to my mind. This makes a brilliant story of the rapid development of a diffused and disorganized tongue into an effective modern language and literature. How much pain has gone in bringing about this mighty change, can be best understood if we recall the process of struggle Hindi had to undergo till it came to its own ; translations from other languages being a most prominent feature of this struggle. These translations were done from the various sister languages in the country, as well as from different European languages, chief of them being English, French and Russian.

In the case of Indian languages the translations were done mostly without choice or selection. All manner of books were translated and badly too. In some cases, curious enough to note. it was also found that works originally written in Hindi were retranslated into it, from their Bengali or Marathi translations ! Such cases were indeed very few. Books from English were also translated, but with little success, though it was English again, through which we could get at Continental literature, so that every time we had to take recourse to the English language. Translating from translations is perhaps the most unfortunate of all the prevailing practices in the domain of literary art ; for it not only fails to do justice

to the original work, but also stands in the way of establishing direct contact with the language and literature concerned. Hindi has always suffered from this one very great defect. Thanks are due to the efforts of the Hindustani Academy of Allahabad, which has made it a major plank in its programme, to bring out Hindi translations of foreign works of outstanding merit, done from their originals. It is a great venture, and will I trust result in establishing direct contact of Hindi reading public with the other literatures of the world.

Now, coming to the translation under review, I must say a few words regarding its language. Simplifying the language to adapt it to day-to-day business in politics and public life, is no doubt a healthy tendency in the present day Hindi world, but we are afraid that over-zealous individuals and organizations are carrying this process of simplification to the extremes, thereby robbing the language of its literary beauty and natural charm ; which in turn has put the literary worker in the field in a most awkward position. To be frank, however we may try, the language of the literary man cannot be completely reduced to that of the market place without loss of its subtler literary and aesthetic values. As it is, we are having a curious phenomenon of language which is neither fish nor fowl. And like most other publications of the Academy the present translation of Lessing's drama is also dominated by the aforesaid tendency of reducing the literary language to that of the market place, and perhaps not without some loss of the artistic merit of the original work. While going through it the reader cannot help being conscious of the fact that he is reading a translation, as the rendering has not been made so as to suit the special genius of the Hindi language. Its language appears to be manufactured rather than spontaneous.

B. P. Chandola.

THF SANGRAHACUDAMANI OF GOVINDA (A Treatise on Music) : edited by Pandit S. Subrahmanya Sastri, F. F. S., Adyar Library, 1938.

It is known that the art of music was developed in ancient India with all its technics. The sages, Bharata and Śārangadeva, are our ancient authorities on the Subject. There is also room to believe that there have been many other writers on the subject in olden days. The present author, Govinda, seems to be the latest in the field. He is said to have struck a new path in the music technics and hence his work should be important for the students of music. Printing and get-up of the book are excellent.

N. Aiyaswami Sastri.

HANS (Hindi monthly) Published by Saraswati Press, Benares. Editor : Sripat Rai. In India Rs. 6/- annual.

IT was in October 1935 that 'Hans' assumed the role of the Organ of All-India Literatures and we welcomed this new effort by our co-worker in these columns in 1935. After three years, during which it underwent a change in its ideal and policy, it once again has, from October 1938, reassumed the role of interpreting the various provincial vernaculars through the medium of Hindi.

The October number opens with an article by Poet Rabindranath Tagore and amidst the galaxy of contributors to this number are litterateurs of eminence like Syts. Sudarshan, Kishorelal G. Mashruwala, Ramkumar Verma, Hazari Prasad Dwivedi, Lalitacharan Goswami, Waman Chorghade and others. Srimati Lilavati Munshi contributes a fine thumb-nail sketch of Prof. K. T. Shah for this number. The general tone of the journal is commendable and judging by this copy it must be said that 'Hans' has a standard worthy of its name and reputation. We wish our sister journal every success.

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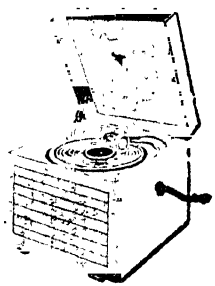

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We regret that reference was not made to the fact that Dr. Amiya Chakravarty's article in the last issue of our Journal was from his book, *Dynasts and the Post War Age in Poetry*, published by the Oxford University Press :—*Editor*.

THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

February | *New Series,* Vol. IV, Part IV. | 1939

TASHER DESH
OR
KINGDOM OF CARDS

A Lyrical Farce by Rabindranath Tagore

INTRODUCTION

THIS daring and delightful comedy, originally conceived and written as a short story, was first dramatised for the stage in 1933 and successfully produced that year both in Calcutta and in Bombay. The present translation is of the dramatic version, as revised by the author this year for another performance on the Calcutta stage. One whole scene and several new songs and dances have been added. The play must be seen on the stage to be properly appreciated, for the contrast between the two rhythms of human behaviour, one dominated by custom and tradition, the other breaking free as the first fresh impulses of life tempt it,—which is the *motif* of the play—is only imperfectly conveyed by words, with their necessarily limited meanings. The songs, dances and costumes suggest what the words fail to convey. The present translation therefore aims at no more than merely acquainting the English reader with the story of the play. To enjoy the sparkling wit of the dialogue, the reader must read the original Bengali version, and to measure its full possibilities as a play, he must reserve his judgment till he has seen its representation on the stage.

One feels tempted to call the play a lyrical farce, for its tone is so

light, its mood so playful and its fancy so free that one does not know how else to call it. On the other hand, it seems unjust to call the play a farce when its motive is so serious and its message so genuine. Perhaps if the play conformed to any set canons of literary or dramatic technique, it would be untrue to its theme, which may be described as a dream of anarchy.

The story centres round the experiences of the traditional adventurers of Indian folklore, the Prince and the Merchant who are ship-wrecked and stranded on a strange island, which bears the name of the play. The inhabitants lead lives whose every side is bound by custom and whose every motion is prescribed by convention. Their watch-word is "niyam," or propriety. They sit, rise and move according to a strict code of rules which none dare break. For obedience to it is the only virtue ; infringement of it, the only sin. They are classified, labelled and accorded their status in life, which is sacred because it is prescribed. One is Five, another Six, another Ten ; one is Diamonds, one is Hearts, one is Spades ; and so on.

The inhabitants are scandalised at the behaviour of the Strangers who actually laugh and, what is worse, unashamedly sing of an unknown quest. They angrily reprimand them for their utter lack of propriety and solemnly remind them that whilst life may move in rules, it must not advance, lest in advancing it may be waylaid. They proudly declare that their wars have colour, but no passion ; code of contest, but no strife ; results, but no conquests ; pageantry, but no weapons.

The whole scene, with its playful and pungent dialogue, is a delicious satire on our own conventionalised lives which are bound on all sides by "niyam" or propriety. Though our ordered existence moves in routine and ritual, life has ceased to grow in us. Like a pack of cards, we are coloured, designed, labelled, and shuffled and dealt, according to an unchanging code of rules that have method but no meaning, pedantry but no purpose. What is "in order" is sacred, and what is "not in order" is sinful. We know no happiness save in obedience to system and convention ; no fear save of falling from them. We laugh at the Fives and Sixes without realizing that we are laughing at ourselves ; the Fives and Sixes only parody our own imbecilities.

To go back to the story. The Strangers bring with them the breath of bursting youth. They sing the song of freedom. They dance the dance of anarchy. They stretch their arms to where the unknown lures. The stale and heavy atmosphere of the Kingdom of Cards is agitated. The young princesses become restless. Yearnings, unfelt before, wake in their virgin hearts. Nature speaks to them. Clouds beckon them to the unknown spaces beyond the horizon. The dancing rivulets coax them to set their hair to the rhythm of their ripples. Flowers implore them to

let them adorn their ringlets. Birds sing to them of the forest groves where love waits in hiding. Age-old yearnings are thus released and every heart cries for its fulfilment. Desire drives all fear away. Timid ones become bold and fling all convention to the winds. The new rhythm that has been discovered at last finds its cry in the song of Free Choice.

The play is a delicious little satire, as provoking as it is playful. The satire pricks but does not sting. The numerous songs and dances delight the senses without drugging the intellect. The symbolic character of the Kingdom of Cards has given ample scope to the fancy of the artists at Santiniketan in designing the costumes and scenery.

The play bears striking testimony to the still amazing intellectual vitality of the aged Poet. It is good to know that at the age of seventy-seven the Poet's faith in the value of liberty for the individual is undiminished, his enthusiasm for the adventurous impulses of defiant youth unabated. It is refreshing to see the noblest interpreter of the classic India make merciless fun of culture and tradition (*krishti* and *niyam*) in whose names social tyranny would stifle every fresh impulse of life. Live freshly, is still his cry, for that alone is living truly ; and if that is inseparable from living dangerously, then live dangerously.

K. R. Kripalani.

KINGDOM OF CARDS*

By Rabindranath Tagore

PROLOGUE

[Prince *is sitting pensively by himself. Enter* Merchant.]

Prince

Friend, it is hard to bear.

Merchant

Whatever has happened to you Prince, that you are as restless as an anchored boat tossed by the flood-tide ?

Prince (sings)

My unquiet spirit
yearns for the unexplored,
the bird of the alien nest
goes crossing the hazy horizon
and my thoughts are driven by the troubled wind
rushing from a far-away sea :
my dream spreads its wings
while I remain chained in a golden cage.

[*Enter* Patralekha†]

Merchant

Patralekha, our Prince seems to have some secret which gives him no peace. You may know it.

Patralekha (sings)

Your secret is shadowed in your eyes, my love,
it flickers on your lips,
it lends its tune to your smile :
you cannot hide it.
The bees are humming,
the *ashoka* opens its heart to the sun,
and your secret, like a lotus in the morning,
is bathed in a glow of love :
you cannot hide it.

Prince

No, I will never hide it. It will be disclosed when I start for the

---

* Translated from the original Bengali by K. R. Kripalani.

† In Sanskrit classical drama, the female confidante of the Prince.

unknown. Too long have I brooded by the sea-shore idly watching the waves.

Merchant

But where would you go friend ?

Prince (sings)

I will venture to court the delight of Danger,
seeking the New.
If I miss my luck
I shall proudly claim
the splendour of failure.
Sailing in my boat of ten hundred oars,
I may meet some precious surprise
across mysterious waters.
I refuse to bury my days in this barren golden sand.

Merchant

Who is there in that land for whose sake, O friend, you would give up everything and undertake such hazards ?

Prince

Nabina, Nabina !*

Merchant

Indeed, now I understand. But who is this Nabina of yours ?

Prince

She is a captive in the castle of an ancient tyrant. She must be rescued.

(sings)

O Nabina,
Your face is obscured by the dust of daily traffic ;
We only hear your whisper in the spring breeze
and your waking murmur in the early dawn.
We feel you only in dreams
and find your vision in the garden of the gods,
dressing your hair with the flowers of paradise
and striking up in your vina-strings
chords unknown.

[*Enter* Queen-mother]

Merchant

Queen-mother, the Prince wants to go in search of fairyland.

Queen

How's that ? Do you want to be a child again !

---

* Spirit of Youth.

Prince

Yes, mother, I feel suffocated in this world, oppressed by old men's maxims.

Queen

I understand, my child. Nothing really is the matter with you. You have no wants and that is why your mind is so restless. You need something to yearn for.

Song

I dearly wish to want,
to want what is in the beyond,
and this is my cry.
In the heart of my hoarded acquirings
there is a hidden pain for what is not.
I yearn for losing my all in love to gain myself,
as the vanished evening star wakes up
in the star of the morning.

Queen

My child, by binding you to me, I shall only miss you. You cannot endure the meshes of pleasure, of the tender care that claims you for itself. Let me not attract ill omen through my timid doubts at the moment of parting. I will place on your forehead the auspicious mark of white sandal-paste, and fasten in your diadem a bunch of oleander. I go now to attend to the service of the deity. At dusk I shall line your eyelids with the stain of the sacrificial lamp that your sight may have freedom of vision.

[*Exeunt* Queen-mother]

Prince (sings)

The sea raves and rages,
the lightning rends the clouds in the sunset sky ;
below roars the foaming fury of the water.
What matters if we reach not the shore,
but fathom the deep !
Away with this drooping dejection,
the burden of wearisome hours !
Ah, for the freedom of lonelines
on the bosom of the boundless sea,
and the mystery of the untold treasure
lost in forlorn lands !

SCENE I

[*Enter* Prince *and* Merchant]

Prince

So at last the ship-wreck has cast us on the shore. We are the offering the tempest has made to this island.

Merchant

It seems the Chariot of Death has carried us backwards !

Prince

We bring with us to this land the call of the tempest.

Merchant

Was it so very necessary ?

Prince

Of course, it was. Do you not see, the people here know neither how to live nor even how to die.

Merchant

Indeed, I was amazed to see them in the morning. They seemed to be doing nothing at all, with great ceremony, their movements strangely angular. They were not asleep nor completely awake.

Prince

They seem to have one dimension missing. They walk and yet do not advance. They look as though Providence forgot to pump into them any air to make their limbs nimble.

Merchant

They seem not to be aware of life's hazards. And you call this island of the living-dead the New Land. This is neither new nor ancient.

Prince

Do not despair, my friend. This is a people whose mind is drowsy with the magic of a vanished age. When the covering is lifted, the new form of their life will be revealed. We have still to cross the dead sea of their habit which never stirs. But wait. The tempest will come ; and when it comes, the boat to the New Land will defy its anchor.

(sings)

On the wreck of the old boat we have floated to the New Land,
where the stranger's tongue will whisper to us of hopes unfelt before.
They will weave anew the web of our fate with unfamiliar threads,
in the colour of an undefined pain.
And the nameless darling of our dreams will come
with the garland of unnamed flowers to crown us.

[Prince *bursts into a fit of laughter*]

Merchant

What is the matter ?

Prince

Just look ! What a sight ! Some with red caps, some with black, they seem made-up on every side. See how they rise and sit, turn this way and that, walk in and out—their each motion marked with such deep gravity as though it alone mattered. How very funny ! Ha, ha, ha, ha.

[*Enter a group of card-inhabitants*]

Mr. Six

What sight is this ! Laughter !

Mr. Five

Have you no sense of shame ? Laughing !

Mr. Six.

Have you no sense of propriety ? Laughing !

Prince

Our laughter has some meaning, at least. But what meaning can that farce have which you were conducting there with such solemnity ?

Mr. Six

Meaning ! Why should conduct have meaning ? Propriety. Is not propriety enough ? Are you crazy to question that ?

Prince

It is not so easy to determine which of us is really crazy. How would you decide ?

Mr. Five

By your behaviour.

Prince

Well, what was it you noticed about our behaviour ?

Mr. Six

We noticed you people had only movement, no manners.

Merchant

While you seem to have only manners, no movement.

Mr. Five

Don't you know that manners are ancient and sacred, whilst this moving-on is a modern craze ?

Mr. Six

How utterly uninstructed you are ! No one seems to have explained to you how on the road-side there are pit-falls that gape to swallow, thorns that pierce and stones that bruise. Calamity hangs over each step.

Merchant

There seems to be no dearth of instructors in this place. Perhaps we too may be instructed anew.

Mr. Six

Let us first know who and what you are.

Merchant

We are foreigners.

Mr. Five

Enough. No more need be said. It means you have no caste, no clan, no creed, no community, no lineage, no family, no status.

Prince

We have nothing Nothing. Only that which may remain when all these have been denied. But let us know who and what you are.

Mr. Six

We come of the world-renowned community of the Cards. I am the Honourable Mr. Six.

Mr. Five

And I am the Honourable Mr. Five.

Prince

And those two who are standing apart as though in deference ?

Mr. Six

The one in black is Mr. Three ; the other in red is Mr. Two.

Merchant

And what, pray, is the genesis of your race ?

Mr. Six

When Brahma, the four-headed Creator, at the end of his task felt languid, he yawned a *high-i** in the weary evening. From that holy *high-i* was our race born.

Mr. Five

Because of our such noble origin, in many a foreign tongue we are spoken of as the High-born.

Merchant

How strange !

Mr. Six

At the auspicious hour of the setting of the sun, the Great Grandfather Brahma drew four *high-i's* from his four sacred mouths.

Merchant

Fancy that ! And the issue ?

Mr. Six

Out came the Diamonds, the Hearts, the Spades and the Clubs. Honoured be their names. (*All bow*)

---

* *High-i* is Bengali for yawn.

Prince

All of them high-caste ?

Mr. Six

Of course, high-caste. *Mukhya** caste. For they were born of the holy mouths of the Creator. Our first great poet, the revered Tas-ranga-nidhi, who passed his days in stupor, composed the first metre in the delirium of a dream. It is in that holy metre that our thirty-seven-and-half sacred verses are composed.

Prince

May we hear them recited ?

Mr. Five

In that case, turn your faces the other way. Brother Six, chant the *Thoong Mantra* and blow the rhythm in their ears.

Prince

Why ?

Mr. Six

It is the rule.

(*All sing with folded hands*)
High-i, High-i, High High !
Let us all languorous lie.
High-i, High-i, High High !
Let the day in dreaming die.
High-i, High-i, High High !

Prince

I can't bear this any more. Let us face them.

Mr. Five

Ah ! You have broken the spell. A little more and we would have fallen asleep.

Prince

We can see that. But tell me, what were you doing in groups on that bank over there ?

Mr. Six

We were engaged in battle.

Prince

Battle ! You call that battle !

Mr. Five

Of course ! Waged according to the strictest propriety—conducted according to the ancient rules of the Community of Cards.

---

* Pun on the word *Mukhya*, which means *high* as well as *belonging to the mouth*.

(*Song*)

Our painted lives so wondrous pure !
In frames of sanctity secure !

Merchant

Be that as it may. But what is battle without passion ?

Mr. Six

Our passion is in our colour.

(*Song*)

Our battles boast no bloody aim :
Our soldiers civil, meek and tame.

Merchant

Well, well, let it be. Nevertheless there should be a flourish of musket and sword.

(*Song*)

Our grenadiers are weaponless,
Save for the pageantry of dress.

Prince

But can you have war without some grievance on either side ?

(*Song*)

We stay to propriety glued,
Unmoved by friendship or by feud.

Mr. Five

I say, foreigners, your sacred texts too must have given you some account of your genesis.

Merchant

Indeed, they have. At the very beginning of Creation, as Father Brahma was charging the sun on the whetstone, a spark therefrom strayed into his nostril. A sneeze escaped him. Of that sneeze, were we born.

Mr. Six

That explains your inordinate restlessness.

Prince

We cannot stay quiet. We burst out as it were.

Mr. Five

Hardly commendable !

Merchant

Hardly ! Even here we are unable to quieten this ancient agitation.

Mr. Six

We can foresee at least one good result of it. The impulse of that primeval sneeze will soon force you out of this island of ours. Your stay here cannot be long.

Merchant

Staying here is indeed difficult.

Mr. Five

How are your battles conducted ?

Merchant

After the manner of the sneezes of rival nostrils.

Mr. Six

You too must have some sacred verses by your first poet ?

Merchant

Indeed, we have.

(*Song*)

Sneeze away ! Sneeze away !
So drive the craven fear away.
Sneeze away ! Sneeze away !
So scare the sluggard ease away.
Sneeze away ! Sneeze away !

Mr. Six

I say, Brother Five, these creatures are outrageously foreign. What may be your caste ?

Merchant

We are the Agitators. Born of the agitation of the Primeval Sneeze.

Mr. Five

Doesn't sound like a high-caste name.

Merchant

You people were blown high by the breath of the Yawn ; We were driven down earthward by the bursting of the Sneeze.

Mr. Six

It was when the Original Father lost control over his nose that you were born. No wonder you are so strange.

Prince

No wonder.

(*Song*)

We are the messengers of New Youth,
Restless and not to be defined.
We break all barriers,
We are steeped in the intoxication of the wilderness.
We are the lightning that pierces through all vapours.

[Mr. Five *and* Mr. Six *gape at one another*]

This will not do. This will never do.

Prince

We are for doing what "will not do."

Mr. Six.

What of the rules ?

Prince

Only by breaking the rule of the barrier, can you realise the rule of the open road. Otherwise how would you advance ?

Mr. Five

Advance ! What are they saying ! How brazen-faced is their talk of advancing !

Prince

Why do people move at all, if not to advance ?

Mr. Six

Move ! Why should you move ? Custom carries us along.

(*Song*)

Be by custom bound :
Nor ever strain your neck
For the distant prospect's sake
Where dangers may abound.
Be by horizon bound :
Why stray away from here,
Where the age-old path is clear
And safety circles round.

Mr. Five

Look ! Here come their Majesties. To-day the court will be held here. Hold you these twigs, one each. Face north east. See that you don't turn windward.

Merchant

Why ?

Mr. Six

Custom. Can't you understand ?

[*Enter* King, Queen, Princesses *and several* card-courtiers, *all moving in prescribed style*]

Prince

I say, why not win over the King by welcoming him with a song of praise ! You wave these twigs while I sing.

Merchant

Let us try.

(*Song*)

Hail to the Scion of the Race of Cards !
Royal swan floating in the lake of idle play !

Dweller on the shore of lassitude !

[*All throw up their hands in despair, crying : "Misdeal ! Misdeal ! Oh, the barbarians—to break the auspicious assembly before time !"*]

King

Silence ! Stop that noise ! Who be these ?

Mr. Six

Foreigners, Your Majesty.

King

In that case rules do not apply. However, let all of you change your places once. That will redress the impropriety, if any. But first of all, let there be the Royal Anthem of the House of Cards.

(*Song*)

Victory to the descendants of the race of cards !
Behold the Hearts and Diamonds and Spades,
Dancing to the ancient, unchanging rhythm !
Some rise, some sit, some never move :
Some close their lives in shells of sleep.
They never laugh.
They have nought to say. They only follow what is ahead of them.
Their ancient code is bound in chains :
They know no shift, they know no change.

Prince

Your Majesty !

King

Who are you ?

Prince

We are messengers from beyond the sea.

Mr. Knave

Have you brought any offering ?

Prince

That which is most rare in this land.

Mr. Knave

Let us hear what it is.

Prince

Agitation !

Mr. Six

Did your Majesty hear what they said ? They actually want to advance. Your Majesty will not believe it : they actually laugh ! Within a couple of days they will make light the atmosphere of this place.

Mr. Knave

There is no place in the world which can boast of an atmosphere so dense and so immobile as ours. Not even Indra's lightning shafts can rend it.

All

Not even Indra's lightning shafts !

Editor

But what will happen if these light-hearted foreigners succeed in making our atmosphere frivolous ?

King

That merits consideration.

All

Merits consideration.

Editor

A light atmosphere invites tempests.

Priest

The tempest will blow down the fixed poles of our propriety. Then our citizens will get so impudent as to declare before their priests that they would *advance*.

Mr. Five

Not only that, but, God forbid, laughter, like an infectious disease, might flow from one to another.

King

Knave of Spades !

Mr. Knave

Yes, Your Majesty !

King

You are the Editor ?

Editor

Yes, Your Majesty. I am Editor in the celebrated Island of Cards.

King

The culture of this holy land is in charge of your pen.

All

Culture ! Culture ! Culture ! He is the vehicle of the culture of this holy land. He is also its nourisher.

King

You wield two leading columns in your paper ?

Editor

Two big columns, Your Majesty.

King

Then strike terror in the hearts of all by the thunder of those columns. We will not let the atmosphere of this land be made light.

Editor

To that end, Your Majesty, we want our rules to be made safe by special ordinance, lest an alien culture corrupt them.

King

Foreigners ! Have you anything to say ?

Prince

Yes, we have. But not to you.

King

To whom then ?

Prince

To these princesses.

King

Speak on.

Prince (sings)

O lovely forms, placid as stones,
let our own passion catch fire in your hearts.
Come, steal away to the open sky,
that your desires be rosy with the tint of the rising dawn.

Queen

How improper ! How preposterous !

Mr. Five

Banishment for them ! O King, banish them !

King

Banishment ! What say you, Queen ! Why are you silent ? Don't you hear what I say ? Say something. Shall I banish them ?

Queen

No ! No banishment.

Princesses (one by one)

No ! No banishment.

Editor

Remember, O Queen and O Princesses, I wield two editorial columns.

All

Culture ! Culture ! Culture of the Island of Cards ! Protect that Culture !

Editor

Promulgate the dictatorial Ordinances.

Queen

We too are used to promulgating ordinances behind the curtain. We shall see who banishes whom.

Princesses

We shall promulgate the all-upsetting anarchy.

Editor

What are things coming to ! Alas for Culture ! Culture ! Culture !

King

Let the Court adjourn. Let all move away from this place, lest a calamity befall.

[*Exeunt all.* Princesses *hesitate and look back*]

Prince (*sings*)

Why this vacillation, my Honeysuckle,
when the spirit of Spring is rampant ?
Do you not read the message in the newly-budded leaves ?
Do you not hear the knock at the gate
that startles the jasmine into waking ?
Look, the *Bakula* has freed its heart,
the *Karabi* is eager
the *Shirish* shivers in delight
at the sight of the guest coming near.

SCENE II

[*Enter* Prince *and* Merchant]

Merchant

Friend, this place is becoming intolerable. These are not human beings but puppets. How are we to live here ? What if we too became like them ?

Prince

Don't you see that even in these puppets life is beginning to stir ? I am not going to move from here till I have set it fully in motion.

Merchant

Indeed, so it seems. See how Mr. Spades has stretched himself under that tree, gazing upwards, quite oblivious of the rules !

Prince

Perhaps listening for the footsteps of Miss Clubs.

Merchant

Then it has begun.

Prince

Let us move aside and watch their drama.

[*Enter* Miss Spades *and* Miss Diamonds]

Miss Spades

How strange everything has turned since these foreigners brought in the contagion of their wildness ! How strangely my mind is agitated !

Miss Diamonds

Who could have imagined that the Kingdom of Cards would come to this ! So vulgarly human !

Miss Spades

It is this Miss Hearts who is the chief culprit. Haven't you noticed how she walks and takes her seat, as though there wasn't any such thing as propriety ? It's a scandal.

[*Enter* Miss Clubs]

Miss Clubs

Hallo Miss Diamonds ! I hear you are very active those days spreading all sorts of rumours, accusing me of all manner of improprieties.

Miss Diamonds

Why should we not say what is true ? Look at those cheeks of yours and those eyes—were such blushes and such wistfulness ever witnessed in this society before ? You seem to think we are all blind, don't you ?

Miss Clubs

And you sitting in the jasmine bower, whispering confidences to your friend—do you think that is in line with our scriptures ? Just look at that poor Knave there moaning for his mate !

Miss Spades

Enough of your airs ! Look rather at your feet, dyed with the China-rose ! Such immodesty !

Miss Clubs

Well, what of it ? I am not afraid of any one. Nor do I care to act surreptitiously like you people. That day when the Editor's wife was being sarcastic, I told her to her face that it was better to be improperly human than to be properly puppet-like.

Miss Spades

Don't be so conceited . Do you know there's a talk of excommunicating you ?

Miss Clubs

From your community ? I shall be glad to be rid of it. Don't you imagine you are frightening me. (*Exeunt*)

Miss Spades

How perfectly awful ! Never heard such impudence before. Come, let us move away, lest we get caught in such scandalous company. (*Exeunt*)

[*Enter* Miss Hearts *singing*]

Indeed I know not what has guided me to this garden.
It is not to gather flowers,
it is to lose myself in my thoughts,
thoughts that bring tears to my eyes.

[*Enter* Mr. Diamonds]

Mr. Diamonds

You here, Miss Hearts ! I have been looking for you.

Miss Hearts

Why ? What has happened ?

Mr. Diamonds

You are wanted at the Court.

Miss Hearts

Go and tell them, I am lost.

Mr. Diamonds

Lost !

Miss Hearts

Yes, lost. She whom you are looking for is lost beyond finding.

Mr. Diamonds

How strange ! How daring ! And you coming alone to the forest ! Don't you know this is not permitted by the rules !

Miss Hearts

Indeed, it is not. But what rigid rule has let loose this strange bewilderment over this dry desert of an isle ! As I got up this morning I saw that, of a sudden, dark clouds had gathered in the sky. The peacocks of our land that so long have only practised steps according to rules, I saw them today spread their wings and cast off all restraint from their dance.

Mr. Diamonds

Gathering flowers ! However did such an unheard-of pursuit enter your head ?

Miss Hearts

Suddenly it struck me that I was a flower-maid, that I used to gather flowers in some other life. Today the eastern breeze brought me a whiff of fragrance from that life's garden. From the woodland of that life came the bee to hum in my mind those memories.

(*Song*)

It comes with the news of the jasmine that trembles with
a new life in the morning of a distant sky.
How can I remain tied to a mute life counting
the slow steps of the listless hours ?

Mr. Diamonds

Am I to presume that the other ladies too . . .

Miss Hearts

Yes, they too are over there under the tree on the river's bank.

Mr. Diamonds

What could they be doing ?

Miss Hearts

Trying a new mode of dress—even as I have done. How does it look ? Do you approve it ?

Mr. Diamonds

It springs upon me like a surprise—as when clouds release the moon from their shadow.

Miss Hearts

Better go and have a look at your Sixes and Fives and see what has become of those who came to call us to account.

Mr. Diamonds

Why ? What's happened ?

Miss Hearts

Like lunatics they wander about, distracted. Sudden songs break from them. Indeed, they are even humming tunes.

Mr. Diamonds

Humming tunes ! What are you saying ! Mr. Five and Mr. Six singing !

Miss Hearts

If not in tune, then out of tune. I was at that time dressing my hair and therefore had to move away.

Mr. Diamonds

Dressing your hair ? And what may that be ? Who taught you that strange art ?

Miss Hearts

No one. Look, how the yonder waterfall breaks into wreaths, and how they wind themselves into braids ! Who taught them this art ?

Mr. Diamonds

I am puzzled. Miss Hearts, let me take your casket and pick flowers for you !

Miss Hearts

Come with me, and I will take you where the Fives and Sixes are singing.

Mr. Diamonds

Whom to blame ? Even I feel like singing.

Miss Hearts

But see that the Editor does not hear it. He'll drag you into his column. I saw him out on the watch in this forest.

Mr. Diamonds

My fear is fled. Why, I know not. Let me prove it by doing something desperate for you. Command me.

Miss Hearts

Do anything you like, but don't sing. Bring me one of those China-roses blooming there.

Mr. Diamonds

What will you do with it ?

Miss Hearts

I shall dye the soles of my feet with their juice.

Mr. Diamonds

Shall I confess it ? When I woke this morning I had a strange feeling that I had been dreaming all my life and had only just awakened. And my first experience of reality was the vision of a previous life which seemed floating towards me, as it were, on the morning breeze. Its long hushed voice seems to speak to me even now and its forgotten songs are ringing in my ears.

Miss Hearts

I too felt it in my heart, that forgotten song, coming to me like a lost bird to its nest. Strange, how familiar the song seems, even though it is new.

Mr. Diamonds

Listen ! How the heavens resound with that ancient song.

(*Song*)

Let the flowers of my heart yield their colour to paint your feet !
Let my song tremble in your ear like a jewelled ear-ring !
Let my soul weave a garland for you with its rubies of passion !

Miss Hearts

And you made this song for me ? How did you learn to set it to rhythm ?

Mr. Diamonds

As you learnt to fashion your hair.

Miss Hearts

Do you remember how once—in some far-off life—I had danced to your music ?

Mr. Diamonds

Remember ? How could I help it ? What seems strange is that I should have forgotten it so long.

(*Song*)

How my song-boat rocks in the wave of your dance !
If the helm is shattered, the moorings lost,
The waters bounce and bluster,
We fear no fury, we'll ride over the storm.

Mr. Diamonds

I am seized with a passion to challenge death. A distant epic age seems to possess me and I see myself riding out to break open the castle-gate where

tyranny keeps its captives in chains. I can still hear the farewell song you sang to me.

Miss Hearts

Come, fighter, let our lives unite in one unrelenting challenge to Death. We shall shatter to pieces the beetling black rock that threatens our passage. Shatter it we will, even if the wreckage recoils to smother us. We shall pierce our way through the prison walls and march on. Why else do we live ? Is it only to break our back under a heap of futility ?

Mr. Diamonds

Will you dare all that you say ?

Miss Hearts

I will.

Mr. Diamonds

Are you not afraid of the unknown ?

Miss Hearts

I have no fear.

Mr. Diamonds

If your feet bleed over thorns, even then you will not turn back ?

Miss Hearts

Why do you ask that ? Have you lost the memory of that other life when we overcame these obstructions ? I then held the torch for you at night and blew the bugle for you at break of day. Rise and be my hero once again in a new birth ! Break through the blind alley of this futile fate, this refuse heaped up by stolid stupidity.

Mr. Diamonds

Yes, we must tear to shreds this curtain of inertia and rise free and pure and fulfilled. (*Exeunt*)

[*Enter* Six *and* Five]

Six

Well brother, how do you feel about it now ?

Five

I can't think of my life without sinking in shame. What dolts we must be to have accepted this worthlessness so long !

Six

After the self-complacence of all these years, I now feel the torment of the question : What was the meaning of it all ?

Five

Here comes Reverend Ten. We might ask him.

[*Enter* Reverend Ten]

Six

What is the meaning of this ritual of existence—this sitting and rising, lying and waking, all set to order ?

Rev. Ten

Silence !

Both

No more silence for us.

Rev. Ten

Aren't you afraid ?

Both

We know no fear now. Tell us the meaning.

Rev Ten

Meaning there is not, only rules.

Six

And if we break your rules ?

Rev. Ten

Then perdition awaits you.

Six

Yes, we will risk that.

Rev. Ten

What for ?

Five

If only to vindicate ourselves.

Rev. Ten

Such turbulence in this our thrice-blessed land of peace !

Five

A peace we have sworn to shatter.

[*Enter* Miss Hearts]

Rev. Ten

Listen to them, Miss Hearts. They threaten to violate the peace of this ever-still, unfathomed depth of our lives.

Miss Hearts

Our peace is like a rotten old tree, within which worms have eaten up all substance. It's best cut off.

Rev. Ten

For shame, Miss Hearts ! Such words to come from your lips ! You are a woman, and women must cherish peace, as we men must cherish culture.

Miss Hearts

We've had enough of your priestly wisdom, enough of your peace. It has numbed our bodies : it has outraged our souls. We shall endure no more of it.

Rev. Ten

Good Heavens ! Who taught you all this ?

Miss Hearts

Some power whom I've been calling all the while. Listen ! Can you hear my song pouring out of the sky ?

Rev. Ten

The sky ? Good Heavens ! Our women talking of the sky ! What is the world coming to ! Some calamity will surely befall me if I tarry here longer. Let me flee ! (*Exeunt* Rev. Ten)

Six

Lady, will you deign to point out to us the path !

Five

You have been initiated into the sacred cult of revolt. Initiate us too.

Miss Hearts

We dwell in the stillness of stagnation. We must rise or we'll rot.

Six

If we stir ever so little, they denounce us as unclean.

Miss Hearts

Let them denounce, if they will. There is nothing like the uncleanliness which is death.

Five

To-day there's hardly any one to be found outside this wood. And so the king has ordered the Court to be held under this tree. In that assembly we shall anounce our break and take our leave.

[*Enter* Prince *singing*]

Forgive me, O thou peerless one,
If today my song rambles in a vagrant strain.
Today the torrents fall in untamed delight,
The rivers are in flood,
And the clouds are stampeding before the gale.
Forgive me, O thou peerless one,
If today my manner is erratic.
O'er your dark eyes rests the shade
Of clouds like a distant dream.
In your deep dark hair are asleep
The ripples of an enchanted stream.
Forgive me, O thou peerless one,
If today my manner is erratic.

SCENE III

[*Enter* King *and* courtiers]

King

This place seems strange ! What smell is this !

Mr. Clubs

It comes from the *kadamba.*

King

Kadamba ! Funny name ! And what bird is calling there ?

Mr. Clubs

'Tis called a dove.

King

Dove ! At least in this land of cards it might have a better name. We shall find it difficult to attend to our work today. Today the sky seems to have found voice, the wind sings. 'Tis hard to subdue one's mind. Even the Queen would break out in wild dances like one possessed. And you, courtiers, 'tis difficult to know you to-day. How is it you have no court attire ?

All

We are hardly to blame. Our costumes suddenly became loose, just dropped off. They lie scattered along the road.

King

Even you, Mr. Editor, seem poorer in gravity.

Editor

I came to these woods in the morning to mark down the runaways. But the contagion in the air of this place suddenly infected my report with rhymes. I understand modern medical authorities name such an unrestrained flow "influenza".

King

What sort of rhymes ? Let me hear them.

Editor

Where life breaks free
From its fettered mode,
There the priest has no power
To protect the tower
Of Culture and Code
From all-round anarchy.

King

Excellent. This is just the principle of our society. Let all children of the fifth grade class in our schools commit these verses to memory.

Six

Sire, we are not school-boys of the fifth grade class. We feel we have grown up. Such verses do not suit us.

King

Let all restlessness cease. Is it not laid down in the Sacred Text : "Those who are still and move not, even Death disdains to drag them away?" And you foreigners !

Prince

Your Majesty !

King

You have set our Island of Cards rocking, what with your divings into the deep, your scaling of the heights and your cutting of pathways through the woods. Why all this commotion ?

Prince

Your Majesty, how do you explain *your* movements, this measured rising and sitting and turning this way and that ?

King

Such are the injunctions of rules.

Prince

Then these are the injunctions of Will.

King

Will ! Confound it ! Will ! Will in the Kingdom of Cards ! (*Turning to the courtiers*) What say you to that, friends ?

Six and Five

We have all been initiated into the Sanctity of Will.

King

What mean you ?

(*Song*)

All life is a Dance of Will !
Will destroys, Will rebuilds,
Will alone creates.
Will breaks the fetters of old creed,
To fashion it anew.

King

Away ! Away ! No more of this. (*Turning to Miss Hearts*) Wherefore this sudden chaos ?

Miss Hearts

It's the Will set free.

All the royal household

It's the Will set free.

King

What ! And you Mr. Editor, why are you so mute ?

Editor

Sire, my editorial columns are shattered.

King

And the Dictatorship of Convention ?

Editor

Convention is doomed. It will work no more.

All

It will work no more.

King

What's the matter, Queen ? Why do you rise in such hurry ?

Queen

I can sit no longer.

King

I am afraid your mind has become restless.

Queen

Indeed it has.

King

Don't you know restlessness is the biggest crime in our Kingdom ?

Queen

I know, and I know also that no crime is more delightful than this.

King

How can what is culpable be delightful ? Have you forgotten even the language of your land ?

Queen

In our language they call shackles ornament. 'Tis time such language was forgotten.

One Courtier

Yes, Your Majesty, they call prison the father-in-law's house.

King

Silence !

Another Courtier

They call riddles Scriptures.

King

Silence !

Another Courtier

They call the dumb a saint.

King

Silence !

Another Courtier

They call the blockhead a savant.

King

Silence !

Another Courtier

They call death life.

King

Silence !

Another Courtier

They call the cage heaven.

King

Silence !

Queen

And they call heaven a crime. Come, shout, Victory to Will !

All

Long live Will !

King

Queen, you are exiled !

Queen

And thus saved !

(Queen *is about to leave*)

King

What, Queen, are you really going ? Whither ?

Queen

To exile.

King

And leaving me behind all alone ?

Queen

Why should I leave you behind ?

King

What then ?

Queen

I shall take you along with me.

King

Whither ?

Queen

To exile.

King

And these my subjects ?

All

We will all join in exile.

King

What say you, Rev. Ten ?

Rev. Ten

I think exile is best for us.

King

And your scriptures ?

Rev. Ten

I'll throw them into the water.

King

And the Law ?

Rev. Ten

That will not work.

All

Will not work, will not work.

Queen

Where are those two humans ?

Prince

Here we are !

Queen

Can we too ever become human ?

Prince

Certainly, you can.

King

I say, foreigner, can I also become human ?

Prince

I have my doubt. But the Queen is there to help you. Long live the Queen !

All

Long live the Queen !

(*Song and Dance*)

Break the bar, break the barrier !
Let the captive mind be freed.
Let life with its boisterous laughter
flood the dry river bed,
sweeping away the dead and the dying.
We have heard the call of the New,
We shall storm the castle of the Unknown.

THE BEASTS

UNDER the forty-two inches of your chest
Slumber forty-two thousand animals.
They sleep and sleep, as if dead.
Unleash them, O Brother.
    The Shylocks and Tamerlanes
    Pervade the world again
    In their naked hideousness.
    And those flatterers who talk sweet
    And rub their hands and leer,
    Who wait and bide their time
    To jump at your throat,
    Traitors, all of them.
Tear off their veils,
Challenge them, the beasts !
    Rouse your animals, your furies.
    The forty-two thousand of them
    Who are primal valour, and courage
    And life—
    Let their eyes flash steel-blue pride
    Before which the traitors, the savages
    Will shrivel.
Let them wake
On the verge of the night of self-annihilation
Unto the dawn of self-realisation.

Yuvanasva.

Translated from the original Bengali by the author.

TRADITIONALISM AND INTERPRETATION OF EXPERIENCE

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THERE was a time when philosophy was valued as connected with the very existence of people's lives. That was a time when no distinction was drawn between it, religion, and the special sciences. A particular understanding of the world was as dear and valuable to man as his own life. He lived and died for it. None could dissuade a Buddhist convinced of the value of Nirvana from renouncing the world and its pleasures. Empedocles could jump into the terrible crater of Mount Etna in the belief that fire was the principle of life. Speaking of the Middle Ages, Bertrand Russell writes that, whatever be their shortcomings, there was then complete harmony between man's life and belief, which harmony is miserably lacking in the present age. The Hindu was convinced that this life was meant for the realization of the Brahman, which is the Beyond, and his life was accordingly regulated. Similarly, the Christian of the Middle Ages did not have to think how he was to lead his life, and did not doubt whether he was deceived by the mode of life prescribed by the Church. The philosophical teachings of the sages, both in India and outside, permeated the thought, and influenced the will and action, of the people of the age so much that each controlled the other with little murmur and full satisfaction ; little or no clash was felt between them, and the feeling of despair never stole into the mind of man in the form that he was cheated by his faith.

But now philosophy has assumed a different shape. There is not really one philosophy now, but many, as many, we shall not be wrong in saying, as there are men on earth, probably excluding the primitive and the orthodox (*smārta*). Philosophy is regarded as a system and as many systems are possible as the points of view from which they can be constructed. Each system as expressive of a view-point deserves the attention of the learned and the thoughtful. Sometimes even the silliest attempts at systematisation are excused and courtesy is shown them on the ground that they are expressing a view-point. Mr. Joad tells us of a number of such attempts by some of his lady and banker friends, who were highly hopeful that they could supply solutions of all the world's problems. We have now such a bewildering number of them that we are unmoved by any in particular. Philosophy has thereby lost its vital connection with our life's existence. Its study has become more or less a pastime like that of fiction. So far no philosopher has yet appeared who has constructed systems of philosophy

one after another like the writer of fiction or drama. But if the present attitude to philosophy gains strength we shall not be surprised if one appears. The philosopher will then write from one stand-point after another ; we may say, he will assume one pose after another. He will amuse his reader, and will be paid like so many other amusers.

Is there a remedy for this state of affairs ? We certainly want a philosophy that touches our life, that can mould and guide it, so that complete accord obtains between our thought and action. The ideals that it presents should not be poetical fictions, created by a rebellious heart defeated and turned within into the realm of fancy by the hard concrete fact outside. They should have as much stability and reality as this hard fact. Our numerous systems deprive us of the reality in which we believed ; for we attach equal importance to the basic reality presented by each system, and as there cannot be as many realities as the systems we do not believe firmly in any. We therefore want a philosophy which depicts for us a reality that is as real as our conscious life with its joys and sorrows, affections which we cannot be indifferent to and repudiate. Naturally such a philosophy must be metaphysics which treats of the nature of being or existence itself, or it must be something based on or derived from it.

Such a derivation M. René Guénon calls traditionalism or the truth of *sanātana dharma*. Metaphysics is, he says, the knowledge of the universal (*Man and His Becoming*, p. 4), a universal that is unlimited. It is known through the *Sruti* or intellectual intuition, and the *tantras* or the so-called systems of philosophy like the Advaita, the Sankhya, etc., are the results of reflection on the *Sruti* (*Ibid*, p. 14). The difference between the *Sruti* and *Smṛti* is therefore that between intuition and reflection. But reflection is not independent of intuition : it is not an independent system with a stand-point of its own like a system of contemporary European philosophy, but is just an expression of that intuition. Though there are many *tantras* or *darsanas* of Indian philosophy, each claims to be the expression of the same intuition or the *Sruti*, though it claims to be the only right expression ; so that the only ultimate stand-point is that of the *Sruti* or the intuition of the unlimited universal. Even a philosophy like the Vaiseshika, which is a rank pluralism, claims the support of the *Sruti* ; and Vijnanabikshu, a Sankhya philosopher, thought it necessary to write a commentary from the side of the Sankhya on the *Brahmasūtras*. Nay, followers of even Saivism, Vaisnavism, etc., religions which are sectarian and local in origin, felt the need of tracing their doctrines to the *Sruti*, and wrote commentaries on the *Brahmasūtras* which are unanimously recognised as the right interpretation of the Upanishads or *Sruti*. Thus there is a single metaphysical background for all kinds of views, and so one single metaphysi-

cal tradition. Because this intuition is the knowledge of the most real being, a reality that is the essence of one's conscious life, one can hardly afford to be indifferent to it. The study of the *tantras* is not an intellectual pastime or amusement, but is expected to lead the student to intellectual intuition or the *Sruti*. In this intuition one encounters the hard fact, the fundamental basis of life, the foundation of the whole world. It therefore touches one's life, enters it. The intuition of that reality now becomes the guide of man's life and shapes it in conformation to itself. Man's thought and action now become harmonious and work without clash. He now feels that he has strong ground to stand on and enjoys peace of mind and life, that is born of confidence and conviction.

The knowledge of this intuitive reality is, as Guénon says, divine or sacred knowledge (*brahmavidyā*). The *tantras* too become part of divine knowledge when they are recognised as the reflective knowledge of the same intuition. But if they are treated as independent systems, each expressive of a finite point of view determined by the mental horizon of the author, who in order to be original invents a view-point unexplored by his predecessors, they can never be pure metaphysics, the stand-point of which is always unlimited. They may then be classed as profane knowledge. Curiously enough each of our ancient sciences, like medicine and even erotics, claims that it is intended ultimately for the realisation of the Brahman, and hence is directed towards the same intuition or *Sruti*. So far, as M. Guénon would tell us, it is part of divine knowledge. Thus a unification of all the sciences was achieved, for each science directly or indirectly was an expression of the same intuition and was pointing towards it. The metaphysical tradition or continuity was thereby maintained ; for the unlimited universal at the background was never lost sight of. Each *tantra* or *darsana* was really not a rival system, but is complementary to the rest. Even orthodox writers like Madhavacharya, the author of *Sarvadarsanasangraha*, saw that one *darsana* practically led up to another until the highest *darsana* or perception, that is, the intuition of the unlimited universal, was attained. They viewed the *darsanas* as stepping stones, one leading to the other. They did not give equal value to each, in the sense that each was an adequate expression of the original intuition. They, like Guénon, regarded Sankara's Advaita as the truest and highest interpretation of the *Sruti*, and all the rest as leading to it. Even the gross materialism of the Charvakas could merit the title of *darsana*, even though to be rejected. So when it is said that all the *darsanas* are complementary to each other, it should not be understood that each cannot do without the rest, for the nearer one approaches the unlimited intuition the more could its dependence on the lower levels be ignored. The lower have no reality by themselves and depend on the higher,

while the higher can do without them. However, Guénon's opinion is true that all the *darsanas* are regarded as more or less expressions of the same intuition. It is true that some of the heterodox *darsanas* like those of the Charvakas, the Buddhists, and the Jainas, do not accept the validity of the *Sruti* or the veda. But some of the Vedantins, like Madhavacharya in his *Panchadasi*, do not neglect to estimate the value of even these by examining how far they have approached the metaphysical intuition. This Madhavacharya does not hesitate to assign quite a high place to Buddhism even though it is not an orthodox *darsana*. This shows that it is really the meaning of the *Sruti* as handed down orally, the intuition which it means, that they have before their minds as the standard of evaluation, and not the mere word.

M. Guénon has made a real contribution to the interpretation of Indian metaphysics through his insight into the significance of this traditionalism or orthodoxy. This traditionalism served to unify all our *darsanas*, and in fact all our ancient sciences. They all have the same metaphysical background or basis, and M. Guénon holds that the ancient sciences of all countries were unified in the same way, that is, by having the same metaphysical basis. This basis was an intuition. He proposes that all the modern sciences also like physics and chemistry should be unified similarly. He is opposed to the claim to independence of each science. Nay more, he rejects the idea that these sciences have gradually evolved out of some original chaotic notion of the universe. There is no evolution here but expression. The concept of evolution should not be applied to the development of these sciences. The original intuition is not at all a notion, much less a confused notion ; it is a transcendent principle, a principle that is beyond our discursive intellect. The so-called liberation of the natural sciences from metaphysics is not really calculated to enhance their intellectual value : on the other hand, thereby "the possibility of synthesizing the multiplicity" of facts which they study is actually lost. "This way of thinking must be countered with the plain statement, that every thing belonging to the spiritual and intellectual sphere is found in a state of perfection, from which it has continually departed ever since, during the gradual 'darkening' which necessarily accompanies every cyclic process of manifestation ; this fundamental law which we must be content to recall here without going into further development, is clearly sufficient to reduce all the conclusions of what is called 'historical criticism' to nothing."

Even in modern thought the view is found that philosophy is the unification of all sciences and knowledge. But there does not seem to be a unanimous and clear idea as to how this unification is to be effected. Usually Spencer's name is associated with the view that philosophy is the unifica-

tion of all knowledge. But even before him we find philosophers practically doing it. The writings of men like Plato and Aristotle bear evidence to it. Their views upon all spheres of experience are unified in a peculiar way. Later Hegel's *Encyclopaedia* is a colossal achievement of such unification. The underlying principle of Spencer's unification is the concept of evolution. His intuition therefore is the intuition of evolution, and therefore not metaphysical in M. Guénon's sense. Plato's basic intuition is that of the idea, and that of Hegel is that of Spirit. The former's is not unlimited but determinate. Though Hegel's Spirit seems to be the same as the *ātman* or the Brahman of the Upanishads, it is conceived in terms of the determinate self. His universal cannot therefore be unlimited but finite. He really wanted to effect the unification in terms of the highest he could think of, and that was the self. But he did not allow his philosophy to go beyond that. Or to put it in another way, his philosophy differed from the Indian tradition, because he understood the self in a different way. Thus he did not touch the metaphysical intuition that he should have touched, and so his philosophy remained one of the many systems like the others. Thus Guénon's point against the modern tendency in philosophical speculation cannot be that it *does not* aim at the unification of the sciences but that it *cannot* accomplish it. For every philosophy starts from its own stand-point and systematises knowledge from it. But the infinite number of possible sciences refuse to be unified except from the unlimited stand-point. Hence the mistake of the modern systems of philosophy is not that they do not attempt unification of knowledge, but that they try to do it from a finite stand-point. They may call themselves metaphysics ; but Guénon contends that they are not metaphysical. Apart from the question of terminology, we may agree with him in that such a unification can never be a real one. For their universal, being limited and partial, must have to leave out much ; or if it tries to include what it cannot but leave out, the latter will be distorted and ruined.

M. Guénon holds that every culture has a metaphysical background, even the Greek ; so that the Greek and the Indian traditions are the same. But the general opinion among European philosophers is that it is the Platonic tradition that has developed into the present rationalism of West, whereas the Indian is intuitive and mystical. (See Radhakrishnan's *Idealistic View of life* and *East and West in Religion.*) Hegel, contrasting the Indian with the Greek, tells us that the universal in Indian philosophy has not liberated itself from existence, that Indian thought is merged in existence, whereas it is in Greek thought that the universal has, for the first time, emancipated itself from existence and become free. This universal is certainly not the metaphysical and unlimited universal of which M. Guénon

is speaking. But it is the Idea of Plato, which though declared to be eternal, is finite and determinate. It is said to be eternal because Plato conceived it as belonging to a realm which is above time and space. It is eternal therefore in the sense of non-temporal and non-spatial. But it is logically finite, because it is one of many. Similarly, it is logically not free, though temporally free. Further, its reality or existence, whatever that be, seems to depend on a physical counterpart existing in time and space. For example, if there were no physical horse, we could not have had the pure idea of horse, of which the physical horse is declared by Plato to be a shadowy copy. So far it does not seem to be really free. However, that Plato conceived of Ideas as having an abode above existence, Hegel regards as a great philosophical achievement, not made by Indian thought. This emancipation of the concept did not stop where Plato left it, but led up to the mathematical conceptions, the truth or falsity of which can be determined apart from reference to existence. (A. N. Whitehead's *Science and the Modern World* gives an interesting account of this line of development in European thought.) In fact, Plato was greatly impressed by this character of mathematical science and made the study of mathematics compulsory for the ruling classes in his *Republic*. On the analogy of mathematical thinking it was thought that philosophy too could be developed. The hope was expressed that pure thought freed from existence could construct, by the application of its own canons, a view of the universe the truth or falsity of which could be determined by the canons themselves without consulting existence. This is the basic conviction of rationalism, which in modern European philosophy is said to begin with Descartes, reached its zenith in Hegel, and is taking various forms in contemporary philosophy like logicism, logistics, the philosophy of organism and so forth. Suspicious of this rationalism, empiricism made its appearance in England but played into the hands of its rival in Berkley's idealism, only because it started as a protest and mistook existence to be only the phenomenal existence in time and space. It was making practically the same presuppositions as its rival, namely the truth of the Platonic Ideas. It was easy for Kant to show that experience presupposes what the rationalists contend for. But even his highest universal, the Supreme Ideal of Reason as he calls it, is conceived in terms of Plato's Ideas. It was far removed from existence, and Kant doubted whether it constitutes the phenomenal world, and whether it has existence. Hegel certainly criticised Kant, saying that such a Supreme Ideal cannot lack existence. But this existence for Hegel was nothing more than a concept ; so that the Idea of the Supreme Being, including of course the *Idea of existence*, was still removed from *actual existence*. Thus philosophical speculation moved uncontrolled in the pure ether of thought, and was

criticised, not without justification, that it was a consistent fairy tale without basis in life.

At least one advantage for Indian philosophy of being tied down to existence was that it could not go astray. A closed system, as Guénon contends, with a specific stand-point was impossible for it, because it intuited the whole existence as such, which is unlimited and formless. Western philosophy distinguishes between form and matter. But this distinction is only relative. There is nothing which is absolutely form and not matter, and nothing which is absolutely matter and not form. Take any material, they say, it is form from one point of view. Even what we call matter is an interpretation and therefore a form. But every form is determinate and therefore finite. And as the concept of existence which is not form is not reached, and even when reached not accepted, philosophers remain at the level of the relative, criticise one another, and end without coming to any common agreement.

We have, however, to point out that the sources of information about Indian philosophy for Hegel were few and his understanding of it was therefore incomplete. It is wrong to say that the emancipated universal in the sense of the Platonic Idea was foreign to Indian thought. The Nyaya and the Vaiseshika *darsanas* advocate the theory of such universals, which even during the dissolution (*pralaya*) of the world exist in the mind of God. Only, this theory is not accepted by Sankara, the *smārta* interpreter of the *Sruti*. For him there is only one universal and that is the supreme Being or Brahman. The question as regards its existence does not arise, because it is existence itself (*sattā*). The question that arises about it is whether it is this or that existence which we experience in this mundane world, and whether we can understand it through any concept with the help of which we understand things of this world. Or to put it otherwise, the question about its existence can be asked only when we mean by existence the existence of the phenomenal world. However, this universal is certainly the metaphysical unlimited universal of which Guénon is speaking. It is not, as Hegel says, immersed in existence, but is existence itself. The intuition of this universal is therefore the intuition of existence. In this intuition there is no scope for fanciful constructions, because what the mind has before it is existence itself.

M. Guénon will perhaps say that the Greek tradition is the same as the Indian, but that it was misinterpreted by the Germans just as they misinterpreted Indian *darsanas* by treating them as systems. He may be right, and it is for the scholars of Greek literature, philosophy and culture to decide. But there is really a line of thought in Plato which yields Guénon's interpretation. Plato regarded the world of Ideas as the real

world and this world of ours as only a shadow of it. If we do not distinguish, as some modern philosophers do, between existence and reality, but identify them, then for Plato it is only Ideas that have existence, and physical things possess existence only so far as they partake of the existence of Ideas. Plato holds that physical things partake of non-existence also. They are less real and have less existence than Ideas. Then the attempt to treat Plato's Ideas as freed from existence would be a misrepresentation, and Hegel and his followers would be wrong. It is also said that the modern idea that mathematics is a science of the possible and not a science of nature was foreign to Greek thought. This admission gives further support to Guénon's contention. Even then the existence of these Ideas is determinate existence ; and though we identify existence with the universal, this universal cannot be unlimited and undivided. But it approaches the Vedantic universal in one respect.

Any way, on the Indian *smārta* view the universal is identical with existence and is unlimited. And so far as this tradition is adhered to, there is no possibility of many points of view and many systems. For existence is itself the stand-point, and there can be only one existence and not many. This existence is intuited, not discursively understood. Even in modern European philosophy we find some insisting on the intuitive basis for our knowledge. Of the Hegelians the outstanding name is that of Bradley. Lossky and Bergson are two other important names. But all these are exceptions to the rule ; and there is the tendency to press the unlimited into the pattern of a limited. To hold that ultimate reality is existence is lightly talked of. The idea is disparaged. This existence is said to be empty, devoid of content. Indian writers are not wanting to catch such phrases, and swallow the idea without questioning what their own *Sruti* means by existence. Existence for European philosophy in general is an abstraction. A thing possesses existence just as it possesses qualities like colour and smell. Pure existence is therefore bare existence devoid of these qualities and consequently empty. But for the Vedanta the things are the forms which existence assumes. We should therefore say, from the side of the Vedanta, that existence possesses these forms or things, not that these possess existence. When it is said that the world is nothing but name and form (*nāma* and *rūpa*), it means that the world is existence in a particular form and with a particular name. To say therefore that for Sankara the phenomenal world does not exist is a gross misconception. It is a particular *form* of existence ; and the form is nothing but existence and can have no separate being. Only in the sense that it has no separate being can the phenomenal world be said to have no existence. And to this sense none can have objection. The forms of existence appear and disappear in it. So existence can never be thought

of as lacking in this or that. It is always full and rich, whether it has this form or that form or even no form. A piece of gold, for example, cannot be said to be empty even when it is not in the form of any ornament.

We get the best view of the stand-point of this unlimited universal or existence in the *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad*. It tells us that there are four levels of existence : the level of the waking state, of the dream state, of the state of dreamless sleep, and the fourth which is above all the three and cannot be spoken of or described. In all these it is the same existence that appears in different forms. In the fourth state and deep sleep it assumes no form, but in the other two it assumes many. Though in the waking state it remembers the forms of dream, it cannot be treated as a combination or organic unity of all such forms. That is, existence can never be understood in terms of forms. It is intuited and is identical with the intuition of itself. This understanding of experience may perhaps be regarded as individualistic and subjective. But the *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad* should not be so understood. For the ego or *ahamkara* does not appear except in the dream and waking states, and in the other two it is nothing. We may say that this Upanishad is pan-*ātmanic*, or, as Guénon would have it, *ātman*-centric. This *ātman* or self, as it is sometimes translated, is not the same as the ego, but it may sometimes put on the form of the ego. It is of course true that there is the general feeling that the objective world surrounds us, and by retreating within in order to get at *ātman* we are leaving objectivity for subjectivity. But this belief is false. The distinction between the subject and the object holds only at the finite level, that is, at the levels of the dream and the waking states. But these are not the final truth. At the level of *ātman* and that of deep sleep to think of this distinction is impossible. But because the hierarchy led up through dream and deep sleep to the *ātman*, and because while some sleep others are awake, it may be thought that reaching the *ātman* means abandonment of objectivity and reality. But this objection can be met by pointing out that the distinction between the subject and object is itself subjective and holds only for the individual who is making the distinction. It would be unreasonable to apply it to what lies beyond it, that is, where the subject who is to make the distinction himself ceases to exist as such.

II

So far we have discussed the importance of traditionalism in philosophical interpretation. M. Guénon may have objection to the word philosophical when applied to the Vedanta ; for he holds that the Veda is neither philosophy nor religion, but is metaphysics which deals with the unlimited universal or intuition. The Veda is not philosophy because it is not a sys-

tem,—even the six *darsanas* are not systems,—and it is not religion because it was not revealed to any individual like the Christ or Mohammed. It is simply intellectual intuition. I had occasion to say that the *Sruti* in this century had to be interpreted as intuition and not as so many words. (*Thought and Reality*, p. 272). But though Guénon wants to limit the meaning of philosophy to system, the word is used now in the very wide and general sense of our understanding of the universe.

Now, if our experience is to be interpreted in terms of an original intuition, and the so-called later developments are to be regarded as expressions of that intuition, and not as the evolution of some definite and rational ideas out of some incoherent understanding, it seems reasonable and necessary that we should re-interpret the so-called evolution of religious ideas. Our ancient religions should not be treated as mere animism, fetishism, totemism, euhemerism, etc., or as imitative magic which is the precursor of science, but as containing the truth of some fundamental intuition struggling for expression. This truth being an intuition will never be expressed adequately ; the expression will result in some symbolism. Yet the symbolism must be such as can direct us to that intuition. If this is ignored, religion would become a mere show, shallow and sensuous.

When we make intuition the basis and centre of our philosophy, the question will naturally arise : What are we to do if each of the *darsanas* or philosophies claims superiority and truth ? Further, if the *Sruti* or scripture falls or is not believed in, does the philosophy based on it fall and have no cogency for the so-called faithless ? Has the Indian philosopher not to convince those who do not believe in intellectual intuition of its reality ? If the intuited universal is beyond discursive thought, are we not to prove its reality logically ? If not, are we not, on that analogy, to accept the truth of every phantasm claimed as intuited ? Moreover, if the deliverance of ordinary consciousness is to the effect that existence is all that surrounds us, and if, on the other hand, existence is really the *ātman* or the self, is it not incumbent on the philosopher to prove that the ordinary consciousness is mistaken ? Can he begin his teaching straight with the statement that his intuition revealed to him true existence which is not this phenomenal world ? The majority of people on earth will wonder whether they have any experience of it. What is not accepted by the majority should not be taken for granted but must be proved.

These questions cannot legitimately be left unanswered by the philosophers. If every *darsana* claims truth on the ground of being intuited, we must have some standard with the help of which we can judge its truth and assign it to a place in the hierarchy of the less and more true. Because

this intuition must be the intuition of existence, and as there cannot be many existences, there is no possibility of the intuitions differing from each other. Here we have to note one important point. It is not the *darsana* that is intuited, but its metaphysical basis. So if the *dārsanika* or the author of the *darsana* claims that it is intuited like its basis, he is necessarily wrong. Consequently, the objection that, if intuition is admitted to be a proof, every fanciful speculation will have to be treated as genuine philosophy has no point ; for *darsana* is an expression of the intuition in discursive thought, and therefore must be coherent and can be argued about. The truth of any *darsana* can be judged by finding out whether it is directed at the intuition of the unlimited universal. So the recognition of this universal by pointing towards it is the mark of the true *darsana*. Though this universal is the same the *darsanas* can be different. For they approach it from different sides and in different ways. But no *darsana* can be a closed system. For though its starting-point, so long as it has not reached this intuition, remains different from those of others, the recognition of the intuition will change its outlook and hence its logic. Thus finally we shall have only one *darsana*. Any *darsana* until it reaches this final stage remains incomplete.

The inevitability of many *darsanas* is due to the impossibility of making the intuition itself the *starting-point* of any *darsana*, though it should be the final *standpoint* of every *darsana* and so its centre. For this intuition is unlimited and all-inclusive ; and for one who possesses it there can be nothing outside which has to be interpreted from it. Naturally the starting-point of every interpretation of our experience must be finite : and so there can be an infinite number of starting-points. But what our metaphysics demands is that, whatever be the starting-point, our philosophy should lead us to the unlimited universal. That is, it should not be assumed that the kind of reality which belongs to the starting-point is the only and final reality and that we can stick on to the starting-point even when we have risen to conceptions of higher reality. What we take to be reality at our starting-point will change and may appear unreal at higher levels. We should therefore give up the attempt to interpret the whole reality simply in terms of the starting-point and must be prepared to face and recognize higher and deeper truths. The conclusion of our philosophy must therefore be a description of what the world would look like to one who knows about the highest truth also.

Hence though closed systems of philosophy cannot be true, there can be many philosophies. Each philosophy of course must contain no inconsistency, consistency and inconsistency depending upon reality with which we are in contact. We should always bear in mind that reality is

not due to non-contradiction, but that non-contradiction is due to reality. In spite of this non-contradiction no true philosophy will be a system like materialism, activism, etc., in which some finite concept like matter or activity is treated as the fundamental reality in terms of which every thing in the universe has to be understood. There is no harm in starting with matter or activity ; but unless our thought leads us to something beyond them which is unlimited, it remains incomplete and imperfect and gives us closed systems which turn out ultimately to be misrepresentations of reality. Our philosophy therefore must be a *darsana* or perception of reality, and not merely a closed systematic construction. *Darsanas* whose starting-points belong to the same level would be complementary ; if they belong to different levels they would constitute a hierarchy.

If the *Sruti* is interpreted as intellectual intuition, our *darsanas* do not fail to have cogency even for those who have no faith in the word of the scriptures. But then one may question whether intellectual intuition is a truth. To cite passages from the *Sruti* in order to prove its truth would be of no avail ; for the *Sruti* itself is interpreted as intellectual intuition, and we would be merely begging the question. Hence the reality of that intuition must be proved independently of the *Sruti*. Here is the occasion for the use of logic. It can be proved by demonstrating that our very logical thought implies it. This attempt itself may be the result of what is called a system of philosophy or at least may be branded as such, though it would never be a closed system.

Even here we have to face a difficulty. There are different systems of logic just as there are different systems of philosophy. Every line of thinking has developed its own logic, so that if we accept the principles of any logic, we cannot refute its philosophy. Hence the logic of that philosophy which treats the metaphysical universal as the basis of our experience may be said to be one among many. This remark of rival logicians cannot be prevented. They may even say that the philosophy too based upon such a universal is one among many. But the upholders of this philosophy should not forget that it as well its logic comprehend other philosophies and their logics and use the latter as stepping-stones to themselves.

Though logic belongs to discursive thought which is finite, it can recognize the unlimited. It can do so only when it finds that its own basis is the unlimited. We have to show that there is such a basis for logic. A discussion of all these points is not found either in the *Sruti* or in the *darsanas* as handed down to us. But it is incumbent on the upholder of this tradition to discuss them, and develop Indian thought. If our tradition is to have a real appeal to the thoughtful minds of the world, it will not be enough if we simply present it in its purity as handed down to us. We

must enter into a comparison of it with the other traditions, and therein cannot avoid the development of our logic and metaphysics.

Similarly that *ātman* is existence itself cannot be enunciated as an axiom with which our philosophy can begin. It is not unquestionably accepted by our ordinary consciousness. For it the proposition must be the result of philosophical argument and not a premise. Hence our philosophy must start with the common conceptions of ordinary consciousness. Generally we take the self to be finite and do not identify it with the metaphysical universal. That they are identical has therefore also to be proved. And until that is proved the teaching of the *Māndūkya Upanishad* cannot be taken as grounded. That is, the world cannot be understood as the form and name of the Brahman or existence until it is shown that the latter is existence itself. We do regard ourselves as existing. But we oppose ourselves to the objective world. Each man treats himself as a minute part of the universe, a drop in the ocean. He thinks that to cling to the self is to leave the object, and so to lose the world's values. It has to be proved that this attitude is wrong ; that the distinction between the subject and object is made within the *ātman* and so when one realises one's identity with the *ātman* one does not lose the value of the object ; and that the *ātman* grips the existence of the object as firmly as that of the subject. At the finite level of the distinction of the subject and the object, it is always possible for the subject to doubt the existence of the object. Even a coherent group of judgments cannot guarantee the certainty of the object ; for the coherence of the judgments depends upon the object and therefore the truth of the existence of the object cannot be made to depend upon the coherence of the judgments made about it. And the only entity whose existence the subject cannot doubt is itself. But the *ātman* grips the existence of the subject so firmly that the latter cannot deny its presence. But all this is argument, not intuition.

The duty of the Indian philosopher is therefore not only to follow the metaphysical tradition of the *Sruti*, but also to interpret it in terms of the philosophical ideas of the present. If he simply presents the tradition as the *Māṇḍūkya* does, he will be ignored by the men of the age and laughed at by the academic philosopher. Further, he will not be doing the service that is expected of him to society. Western ideas have permeated our intellectual atmosphere, and we have to show the value and significance of our tradition in terms of those very ideas. The task of the Indian philosopher is thus doubly onerous.

This paper should not be mistaken to be a criticism of M. Guénon's traditionalism. His insight into the philosophical traditionalism of India is a valuable contribution, and the present writer is much benefited by a study of his views. They helped clarification of some of the ideas at which he is

gradually arriving. But the zeal with which M. Guénon is expounding his views may mislead some into thinking that they may isolate themselves from the general philosophical atmosphere of the world and muse on the traditional metaphysics as handed down in its purity. Though this tradition is true, its truth must be proved, and proved by the very methods which the modern philosopher is employing. I therefore present the reflections also to which I am led by M. Guénon's views while estimating their importance.

AHIMSA *

C. F. Andrews

I WONDER if you realize what a very great pleasure it is to me that you have, so fortunately from my point of view, arranged this Congress at Allahabad ; for along with Delhi, Allahabad has given me some of the dearest memories of my early life in India. Many of you here may not know, for instance, that Munshi Zaka Ullah of Delhi, whose educational career was spent in Allahabad, treated me in his old age as his son, and I was with him when he was on his death-bed. Such a memory links Delhi and Allahabad together. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, both of Allahabad, are two of my oldest friends , and I had with Pandit Moti Lal Nehru a very close friendship, which I have been delighted to continue with Jawaharlal Nehru, his great son.

There are others who have been very dear to me in this city. My own home in Allahabad is always with Prof. Sudhir Kumar Rudra, the son of Principal Susil Rudra. The latter was the dearest friend I ever had in this world. He was my own Principal at St. Stephen's College, Delhi, during my early days in India. He taught me to love India more than any other human being has ever done. His son's home is now my home, and his children call me 'Grandfather'. All this forms a binding link between Allahabad and my own life. There are many other relationships that I might mention, but I would only name that of our Chairman, the Vice-Chancellor, Pandit Amarnath Jha, and the Secretary at this Congress, Prof. N. C. Mukerji.

These things, then, made me at once eager to come to Allahabad, when I received your kind invitation, even though, as you all know, I am not a philosopher and have never pretended to be one. However that may be, I can declare with utter sincerity that I am a lover of the truth of life, and earnestly seek to discover the meaning of life ; and this creates the philosophic mind. Also I feel that here, in India, there is a philosophy, a world-view, which I learnt both from my own Gurudeva, Rabindranath Tagore, at Santiniketan, and from one whom we revere most of all for his noble experiments with Truth, Mahatma Gandhi. Since I have learnt from both of these what I truly believe to be the one way out of the deadly peril wherein the world stands to-day, I could not, when you asked me to preside,

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* Presidential Address by the Rev. C. F. Andrews at the 14th All-India Philosophical Congress, Allahabad, 26th December, 1938.

refuse you. So I said at once : "If you are able, under your rules, to allow me to speak on *Ahimsa,* I should certainly be glad of a public occasion to do so." So that is really how I come to be in this very anomalous position of presiding over a Congress of Philosophers, not being myself one.

To get at once to the heart of the subject, I want to read you two passages, one from a modern writer, Herr Feuchtwangel, the author of *Jew Süss,* the other from Dr. Whitehead, to be found in that very difficult book of his, called *Adventures of Ideas.* If you listen to these passages as I read them together, you will see in what way I shall try to represent to you the Philosophy of *Ahimsa.*

Here is the passage from the book called *Moscow ; 1937* by the author of *Jew Süss* :—"In my youth", he writes, "I belonged to a class of intellectuals, which advanced the principle of absolute pacifism and of complete abstinence from violence. I believe that, during and after the War, we have all had manifold reasons for revising our views on abstention from violence and reflecting pointedly on the use of violence. That, for a writer of responsibility, is no easy problem." This passage, then, represents one modern reaction on this vital subject.

On the other side, from Dr. Whitehead, I shall read a reference to India that seems almost to have escaped notice. "In India," he writes, "the forces of violence and strife, between rulers and people, between races, between religions, between social grades—forces threatening to overwhelm with violence hundreds of millions of mankind—these forces have, for the moment, been halted by two men, acting with the moral authority of religious conviction, the Mahatma and the Viceroy of India (Lord Irwin).

"They may fail. More than two thousand years ago, Plato, the wisest of men, proclaimed that the divine persuasion is the foundation of the order of the world, but that it could only produce such a measure of harmony as, amid brute forces, it was possible to accomplish . . .

"The dramatic halt, effected by Gandhi and the Viceroy, requiring as it does an effective response from uncounted millions in India, in England, in Europe and America, witnesses that the religious motive—I mean the response to the divine persuasion,—still holds its old power, even more than its old power, over the minds and consciences of men."

Let us compare for a moment these two passages, and it will easily be seen, that Dr. Whitehead gives the real answer to the pathetic confession of Herr Feuchtwangel, the author of *Jew Süss,* which I have quoted. Yet it is not easy in Europe, during the present world crisis, to believe in the victory of divine persuasion over force. For in face of the violence that we see gaining its short successes in Europe and the Far East it is almost impossible for the natural man to stand out against the current of common

public opinion which is running so strongly in that direction. This is what philosophy has to do, to-day,—to find these eternal values on which we may base our faith, while the tides of common opinion are flowing so fast the other way.

Here then, is my subject,—the Philosophy of *Ahimsa*. It might be translated, in my own Christian language, the "Word of the Cross". St. Paul says, in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, "The Word of the Cross is foolishness to the natural man"—and that is true. To be absolutely non-violent in the face of brute force, is not a popular doctrine. It seems to be foolishness. Yet it is my sincere belief, as I hope to show, that history on a wide scale has already begun to justify it. Philosophy has to take this proof in hand and make it more and more reasonable,—to show, as St. Paul says, in a daring paradox, that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men."

Let us trace very briefly the history of this thought,—that violence cannot be overcome by violence, that evil cannot be overcome by evil, but only by good. We all know,—it is our joy in India to recall,—that this was at the heart of the teaching of the Buddha, five hundred years before the Christian era, and that the Buddhist Emperor, Asoka, founded a kingdom on this same principle of non-violence. We have our own record, therefore, here in India, in our remote past, which is a beacon light for humanity, pointing on to the future. I like the way of putting it that was offered to me once in conversation by a Buddhist, who gave me the parable of the "Wheel of Suffering". He said to me, "You see, the wheel goes on revolving, and every new act of violence in answer to violence only turns the wheel faster and faster. Every act of retaliation, when a wrong is done, leads to further retaliation, and thus the wheel goes round for ever. But if only *one* good man can return love for hatred, truth for untruth, then immediately the wheel begins to slow down : and if only *all* men could do this, the Wheel of Suffering would cease altogether to revolve."

One of the greatest of all epochs in human history was this period of the early Buddhist movement, which permeated the whole of Eastern Asia with the Law of *Maitri*,—the Law of Compassion. Thousands and tens of thousands of men and women were ready to go incredible journeys over the Himalayas and across the perilous seas, in order to preach this gospel.

A turning-point came in my own life when for one whole week of moonlit nights and sunny days I stayed at Borobūdūr, in Java, the Hill of the Great Buddha. Long porticoes and avenues of sculpture are carved there round and round the hill, telling the story of the Buddha from the Jatakas. At every angle, as the sculpture goes on, you see the form of the Buddha himself in his calm attitude of peace, which was won by pure suffering. This experience led me to the very soul of Ancient India at its

highest moral point, and I never forgot it. Asia, for a thousand years, was thus civilised and made humane, in the highest sense of the word, by that one personality of Gautama, the Buddha, who lived and worked in the Ganges Valley, not far from this place where we are sitting.

It was profoundly interesting to me, when I got to China later and began to find out all I could about its ancient philosophy, to learn that Lao Tze had published in that shortest and greatest book of his, the *Tao Te King*, this thought in his own way. I have put down here one or two of his most striking texts. You can never forget them when once you have read them over. Here are the two of them :

"The victory of violence ends in a festival of mourning."

"The more weapons of violence, the more misery to mankind."

Lao Tze's teaching of the Tao (Path) might be summarised roughly as follows : To be perfectly governed by Tao implies a life which follows the spiritual law underlying the Universe. That law may be called Non-assertion,—the opposite of egotism and violence. All kinds of selfishness and egotism must be abandoned by the followers of Tao. The spirit of harmony will never think of using violence ; for "violence only results in miserable retribution."

Now let me take you right across Asia to ancient Iran, where the Prophet Zoroaster himself puts forward the first stage of this pure teaching in another form. He was still struggling towards the goal, rather than fully attaining it. But with great nobility of spirit, he declared that evil must be overcome by moral force alone,—by that supreme moral energy which is in God and man. His life was lived much earlier than the conventional date, 600 B.C., which is usually given. It must have been as early as 1,000 B. C., or even earlier still. As the Poet, Rabindranath Tagore, has shown in an illuminating essay, Zoroaster's life, with all its moral fire, lit one of the earliest beacons of the human spirit.

Still further on, in Judaea, on the border of Asia in the West, we get glimpses, in the prophets and psalms, of the same teaching, which came out of the heart of sorrow and humiliation. Especially we find it in that most beautiful song of the Prophet of the Exile :

"Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed ?

"He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant and as a root out of the dry ground. He hath no form, nor comeliness ; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

"He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief and we hid, as it were, our faces from him. He was despised and we esteemed him not.

"Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet we did esteem him, stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions : he was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.

"All we, like sheep, have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all."

Here the writer pictures one who suffers to the uttermost, in silence, and thus redeems humanity by the purest suffering love. This is made clear in the last verse of the poem, "He shall see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied." Christians, from the very first, have related this prophecy to the sufferings of Christ, and His victory over death.

Plato realised the same truth about suffering in his own intellectual way. I have already given you from Plato what is really the text of Whitehead's book, *Adventures of Ideas*—the thought of the victory of the divine persuasion over force. This cosmos of ours, he holds, is formed out of chaos by the divine persuasion, the divine *Ahimsa*, conquering violence by moral force. Through the triumph of *Ahimsa*, this cosmos, this fair world of ours, is created and preserved. That is a marvellous conception. One other thought is given us by Plato, that the ideal man, in face of the cruelty of the world, must go through a crucifixion, if he is to show his supreme loyalty to the Truth.

You all realise how, at this Christmas season, my own heart is offering its devotion to One, whom Mahatma Gandhi has called the "Prince of *Satyagrahis*", Jesus Christ. I need only point out to you the simple fact that the Cross, from first to last, presents the final and complete example of the Philosophy of *Ahimsa* : how Jesus on that Cross prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." He thus brought to its supreme conclusion this whole Platonic theory of the Universe, that it is founded upon suffering love.

Here, then, is a subject worthy of the highest philosophic study. It is a theme which we may well work out in India, in these troublous times ; for it leads us back to the foundations of our own spiritual life in its great creative moments.

I have been with Gurudeva, Rabindranath Tagore, in China, when he stood before young China, which had been cruelly goaded to retaliation by the Imperial powers. When he put forward this philosophy of ancient India, Young China answered him at first and said that Imperialism knew nothing except brute force. It only knew violence,—a blow for a blow, and a tooth for a tooth. China must, therefore, encounter these powers with their own brutal weapons.

But the aged Poet, whom they regarded with deep veneration, almost

as if he were the Buddha come back to life, said to them with great compassion. "Do you know that in our Ancient Scriptures all you say is acknowledged" ? They asked him, "How can that be proved ?"

"In our books," he answered, "these words are written, 'By *Adharma* (*i.e.* by unrighteousness) men *do* prosper ; by unrighteousness men *do* get what they want, *but they perish at the root.*' "

"Many old civilisations," he added, "have already succumbed by relying on this idea of retaliation,—that violence can only be overcome by violence, unrighteousness by unrighteousness. But these have all perished.'

Once I went with Tagore to see an infant school in Kobe, and I watched the little Japanese children toddling about. They looked so much like quaint dolls, as they marched to and fro, that I began to laugh. He said to me with indignation, "What are you laughing at ?" I said, "It's funny, isn't it ?" He said, "Funny ? Don't you see they are dressed in full military dress and are doing military drill,—those *babies* ! Don't you see also, on the walls, those blood-stained flags captured from Russia and other countries ? These innocent children are being taught the idolatry of war. It is not a laughing matter at all." I was terribly ashamed.

Then I recall another sight, in South Africa, where I met for the first time Mahatma Gandhi and his wife, Kasturbai, and his sons, who had recently been imprisoned. Yet I found them all speaking kindly of their persecutors, and giving every bit of praise they could to their jailors who had kept them in prison. They were cheerfully accepting the price of suffering as the necessary way of deliverance.

Very soon after this, I had a wonderful experience, when I went up with Mahatma Gandhi to Pretoria, where he interviewed General Smuts. There, at Pretoria, was framed at last what was afterwards called the Gandhi-Smuts Agreement. What was it that won that peaceful victory except the final triumph of divine persuasion over force ? On General Smuts' side there was all the physical might of the modern age ready to be put into execution. Smuts could have crushed the Indian Community if he had wished to do so. But he could not stand out against the moral greatness of that one heroic soul, Mahatma Gandhi.

Before I sit down, I want to declare my faith, my own *religious* faith, that Herr Feuchtwangel, the author of *Jew Süss*, who says that we must change our ideas and answer violence with violence, is pathetically wrong, and that Dr. Whitehead, as he follows Plato and all the seers of humanity, is right. We have to hold fast our faith unto death. For this faith of *Ahimsa*,—this "Word of the Cross",—is "the victory which overcomes the world".

THOUGHTS ON GANDHI'S IDEALISM

Nirmal Kumar Bose

GANDHI'S CONTRIBUTION TO INDIAN SOCIAL IDEALS

THE ideal of ancient Hindu social organization, as of all other organizations, was to make men happy. Happiness depends partly upon the satisfaction of the human desires of hunger and sex, and partly upon other things. At no point of time can we envisage a condition when every wish of all men will be satisfied. Disease and death are inevitable. So nature herself sets certain limitations on the satisfaction of all desires. Full happiness cannot come that way. It may come in part if we satisfy our needs by depending upon our own labours and upon the free and willing co-operation of others, if such dependence does not involve any injury to other human beings. But as for the rest of our unsatisfied desires, we have to fortify ourselves in such a manner that we shall not be upset if they are not satisfied ; and should be able to preserve our equanimity, without, at the same time, degenerating into apathy and mental indolence. We should train our mind in such a way that we shall be able to derive joy from the fullness of knowledge and love and not from the satisfaction of desires. In other words, we have to build up an ideal philosophical attitude on the foundation of a basic minimum satisfaction of human needs.

An economic and social system was built up in ancient India on the basis of hereditary gilds. Equality of income or of opportunity was not envisaged as a necessary ideal ; but in order to counteract the possibility of an extreme accentuation of differences in wealth, a certain ideal was both extensively and intensively propagated. Those who spent their wealth in social welfare instead of personal enjoyment were praised, and those who gave up all their wealth were praised very much. More honour was thus shown to those who renounced than to those who possessed. Men of knowledge were respected more than men of wealth, and thus a scheme was set up to minimise the evils of differences of wealth. The system of production also was such that it did not allow extremes of wealth to grow.

The state was not a very powerful organization. It did not try to smooth down differences in wealth through legal coercion. That was done, as stated above, by setting up a particular set of values and by the creation of a strong and active public opinion in support of it. It might be argued that it is better to bring about equality through law than by depending upon voluntary effort for that purpose, law being much more efficient in that

respect. But then law acts through violence, and the satyagrahi may argue that there is little merit in equality brought about by violence. It does not stay, and requires a permanent violent structure to maintain equalization. He might therefore say in defence of the voluntary method that it is intrinsically more moral and therefore a truer and surer means than the other one. If inequalities grow, as they always tend to do, there must of course, be some means of checking their growth. But such means should be of non-violent non-cooperation exercised by those who wish to challenge such inequalities, rather than of the violent arm of the state.

In any case, in ancient India, a plan was thus devised for minimizing the evils of inequality of wealth.

Hindu society was formed of many tribes and many castes. They had a variety of religions and ceremonies and of social customs. The Vedanta philosophy teaches that all things, all social facts and processes, are conditional. If we take our stand upon that philosophy and try to order our lives accordingly, a completely human way of life can be built up in which we shall not be attached to any particular form or code which has been created under the stress of a particular set of circumstances. This is cultural freedom. And that philosophy also gives us an inward freedom by breaking our attachment to time and place, and self which is an embodiment of time and place.

Ancient Hindu idealists believed that every cultural path, if properly directed, ultimately leads to the Vedantic position. They did not, therefore, uproot the social culture of the subjugated tribes, but tried to raise them to this final philosophical position. Thus a perfectly democratic attitude was held with respect to different types of human culture.

We find something like this among the Russians today in relation to the cultures of the Tatars and Uzbegs. The place of the Vedanta is taken there by Science and the scientific way of life.*

There is, however, a little difference. A Vedantist thinks that all cultures are on the road to Vedanta, and therefore tribal cultures have to be elevated until they attain the completeness and large-heartedness of the Vedanta. The social scientist in Russia does not, however, exercise this attitude with respect to the cultures of the Tatars or the Uzbegs. He does

* Ancient India did not allow men any freedom in the choice of occupations, while assuring them perfect security through monopoly guaranteed by custom and the state's authority which protected that custom. Russia too offers protection from unemployment to its subjects. But there is a big difference in the fact that in Russia all economic planning is done by the state, while in ancient India there was no such conscious planning. People were supposed to follow the trade of their fathers, a trade into which they had drifted through local necessity in the past. Moreover, in Russia membership to trade-gilds is by choice, while in ancient India it was by birth.

no violence to those cultures, but he has no respect for them either. He wishes to replace tribal cultures by the scientific one. He believes that a time will come when all men will outgrow the necessity of less-developed cultures. The Vedantist, on the other hand, believes in the permanent necessity of a variety of human cultures in accordance with varying human needs. He would refrain from saying one is better than the other, for both satisfy human needs under different conditions. This is a pantheistic form of social idealism.

These then were the ideals ; and let us now see how those ideals actually worked themselves in practice.

At its inception, and during its formative period, the ideal was applied to a population which was composed of warring peoples : the Brahminical peoples, some of whom had originated the ideals, and the more ancient tribes and peoples of India. The existence of the hostility was a historical fact, and that was the reason why the ideal of *Varnadharma* was degraded, in actual practice, into the caste-system. Caste is a mean struck between *Varnadharma* on the one hand, and dominant human nature on the other. In that system, the conquerors tried to shift all the burden of labour upon the subjugated people, and also did not accord to some of the newly absorbed tribes absolute equality of status even when they were admitted into the scheme of *Varnas*. The case of the Maga Brahmanas and of some Kshatriyas and of different grades of Sudras is a case in point.

At a later stage in history, we see India rolling in wealth. This was another historical situation ; and the ideal initiated formerly, though in an incomplete manner, now suffered from a further hindrance in the way of its complete realization. Those who renounced and did not enjoy were now looked upon as cranks, to be pitied. Men of intellect sold their soul to the rich, temples became storehouses of wealth instead of storehouses of learning and character.

This period of history led to a weakening of the ideal of *dharma*. Pride led to exclusiveness, and the conquered tribes were now bundled bag and baggage into the last *Varna*, and none of them admitted into the higher ones.

Then came a period of conquest by Mussulman tribes of Afghanistan and Central Asia. Hindu society was now on the defensive, and the ideal of *Varna* suffered still more ; while the caste system grew more and more hide-bound and rigidly, though formally, puritanic. Instead of uniting all the peoples of the world into a brotherhood of *Varnas*, it now made them more and more exclusive, even when they were living side by side.

These are historical facts. At all stages of its history, the ideal had to be applied to human material, and the human material was under

different conditions at different periods of time. The ideal was therefore never capable of being fully embodied in social form. Perhaps that has been the fate of all ideals where large masses of mankind have been concerned. Today democracy tries to establish itself by denying democracy, by shooting down those who differ.

Thus the Indian ideal became tarnished. It was also poor in one respect from the very beginning. There was some idea of economic equitability, but none of equality of income or of opportunity. Here Gandhi has added his contribution to the ancient ideal of *Varnadharma*. As a faithful disciple of Tolstoy and Ruskin, he believes that no man should live upon the toil of others. Therefore all should live by manual labour. He has accepted the ideal of *Varna*, which says that the most desirable organization is that which functions in such a manner that every man can find in it the opportunity to serve the cause of humanity best by exercising the special talents with which he is endowed by nature.* But he has added to it the law that no man shall be free from the duty of bread-labour. "It is a law common to all varnas."

"If all laboured for their bread and no more, then there would be enough food and enough leisure for all. Then there would be no cry of over-population, no disease, and no such misery as we see around. Men will no doubt do many other things either through their bodies or through their minds, but all this will be labour of love, for the common good. There will be no rich and no poor, none high and none low, no touchable and no untouchable.

"May not men earn their bread by intellectual labour ? No. The needs of the body must be supplied by the body. *Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's* perhaps applies here well.

"Mere mental, that is, intellectual labour, is for the soul and is its own satisfaction. It should never demand payment. In the ideal state, doctors, lawyers, and the like will work solely for the benefit of society, not for self. Obedience to the law of bread-labour will bring about a silent revolution in the structure of society. Man's triumph will consist in substituting the struggle for existence by the struggle for mutual service.

"This may be an unattainable ideal. But we need not, therefore, cease to strive for it. Even if without fulfilling the whole law of sacrifice, that is, the law of our being, we performed physical labour enough for our daily bread, we should go a long way towards the ideal." (*Harijan*, 29. 6. 35.)

This will, according to him, bring about a state of economic and social equality which is as much necessary for human progress as freedom is.

* He has also rejected, though not fully, the belief in the hereditary transmissibility of character which formed a part of the law of *Varna* in ancient times. Of this Gandhi is not very sure.

Equality of income is only another way in which love can find expression. Love does not merely express itself by allowing all men to develop along their specific personal channels of life—which is *svadharma*, the foundation of *Varnadharma*—but also by offering to each an equality of opportunity through equality of income.

And this idea, Gandhi has brought to India from the West.

THE NATURE OF GANDHI'S IDEALISM

IN order to understand the nature of Gandhiji's idealism, it is necessary to contrast it with that of the Socialists, and for this purpose we cannot do better than state the latter in the words of Lenin himself. In his book, *The State and Revolution*, there occur the following passages :

1. "The substitution of a proletarian for the capitalist State is impossible without a violent revolution, while the abolition of the proletarian State, that is, of all States, is only possible through 'withering away' (Ch. I).

2. "We are not utopians, we do not indulge in 'dreams' of how best to do away *immediately* with all management, with all subordination ; these are anarchist dreams based upon a want of understanding of the task of a proletarian dictatorship. They are foreign in their essence to Marxism, and, as a matter of fact, they serve but to put off the Socialist revolution 'until human nature is different.' No, we want the Socialist revolution with human nature as it is now : human nature itself cannot do without subordination, without control, without managers and clerks" (Ch. III).

3. "But this 'factory' discipline, which the proletariat will extend to the whole of society on the defeat of capitalism and the overthrow of the exploiters, is by no means our ideal, and is far from our final aim. It is but a foothold as we press on to the radical cleansing of society from all the brutality and foulness of capitalist exploitation : we leave it behind as we move on . . . When all have learnt to manage, and really do manage, socialised production, when all really do keep account and control of the idlers, gentlefolk, swindlers and such like 'guardians of capitalist traditions', the escape from such general registration and control will inevitably become so increasingly difficult, so much the exception, and will probably be accompanied by such swift and severe punishment (for the armed workers are very practical people, not sentimental intellectuals, and they will scarcely allow anyone to trifle with them), that very soon the *necessity* of observing the simple, fundamental rules of any kind of social life will become a habit. The door will then be wide open for a transition from the first phase of communist society to its second higher phase, and along with it to the complete withering away of the State" (Ch. V).

4. "People will *grow accustomed* to observing the elementary conditions of social existence *without force and without subjection.*

"In order to emphasise this element of habit, Engels speaks of a *new* generation, 'brought up under new and free social conditions which will prove capable of throwing on the dustheap all the useless old rubbish of State organisation" (Ch. IV).

Summarising the principles involved in the above statements, we find :

(a) The Socialist Ideal is a condition when men work for one another, i e. for human society, not under compulsion of State laws but of their own accord. The State is unnecessary in the last resort.

(b) Men live more by habit than by will. So to bring about that change, it is necessary to alter present *habits*, and that has to be done by force.

(c) In order to have the power to do so, the proletariat has to capture the present State authority by violence, and then use the same violence in order to shape habits anew.

(d) After the habits have been altered, the State will have to disappear through a process of "withering away", not by any violent revolution.

This is the Socialist method stated in the simplest terms possible, and, we hope, we have done no injustice to it.

This means that Lenin, at least, took human nature *as it is*, and tried to build his plans of revolution as well as of future reconstruction with that as its foundation. But Gandhiji builds upon a different foundation. It is not in the existing passive character of man that his hope lies but in the *possibility of evoking the latent active character* of every human being that he rests his hopes of revolution and of social reconstruction. That man changes and can change for the better, not individually alone, but also in mass, is as much true of him as the fact that he is selfish and blind today, and loves more to be ordered about than to take the responsibility of self-direction.

This seems to me to be the fundamental difference between the way Lenin and Gandhi have approached and also handled human nature. But Gandhi is no utopian dreamer. There are specific reasons why he has rejected the Socialist means of revolution and sticks to the non-violent methods instead. His idealism bears a different character ; and this is what we shall try to explain in the present paper.

He himself has stated his fundamental difference with the Socialists in the following report of an interview published in the *Modern Review*, October 1935.

Question. "Shall we take it that the fundamental difference between you and the Socialists is that you believe that men live more by self-direction or will than by habit, and they believe that men live more by habit than by will ; that being the reason why you drive for self-correction while they try to build up a system under which men will find it impossible to exercise their desire for exploiting others ?"

Answer. "While admitting that man actually lives by habit, I hold that it is better for him to live by the exercise of will. I also believe that men are capable of developing their will to an extent that will reduce exploitation to a minimum. I look upon an increase of the power of the State with the greatest fear, because, although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality, which lies at the root of all progress."

This is a most important statement and marks off clearly the parting of ways between Gandhiji and Socialists, although both agree in their ultimate aim of liberating mankind from all forms of exploitation. Thus Gandhi is an idealist in spite of recognizing the fact that most men live by habit today. Why does he stick to the idealist position and not try to create a Swaraj in India based upon habit and not will as Lenin did in Russia ? Hostile critics say that he is afraid of revolution ; less informed people say that he does not want the eradication of exploitation. Both these charges are not correct. What appears, however, to be the real reason is that Gandhi does not attach much importance to the form which society will outwardly take, provided there is love for humanity burning brighter and brighter within our heart. The outward social form will take its own course, we must take care of the central thing. If we set one corner of the square right, the others will right themselves as a matter of course. His chief concern, therefore, seems to be how to keep the flame of human love burning, how to keep the sense of human unity unbroken even in the midst of the revolution. Non-violent non-cooperation or Satyagraha is for him a way of revolution based upon the sense of human brotherhood. Like a knight of olden days, he jealously guards that treasure and is prepared never to betray the sacred charge even in the darkest hour.

Let us now explain in Gandhi's own terms the character of his idealism in the religious, political and economic spheres one by one.

"The virtue of an ideal consists in its boundlessness. But although religious ideals must thus from their nature remain unattainable by imperfect human beings, although by virtue of their boundlessness, they may seem ever to recede farther and farther away from us, the nearer we go to them, still they are closer to us than our very hands and feet because we are more certain of their reality and truth than even our own physical being. This

faith in one's ideals constitutes true life, in fact it is man's all in all." (*Young India*, 22.11.28.)

"The goal ever recedes from us. The greater the progress, the greater the recognition of our unworthiness. Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment. Full effort is full victory." (*Young India*, 9.3.22.)

"It seems that the attempt made to win *Swaraj* is Swaraj itself. The faster we run towards it, the longer seems to be the distance to be traversed. The same is the case with all ideals." (January 1922.)

This is true not only of his idealism in the religious sphere but in the political and economic spheres as well. Gandhi knows that in actual practice, we attain the mean set between the ideal, on the one hand, and the limitations set by existing human nature on the other. The former is fixed in character (as for example, the desire to free the world from all exploitation of the Socialists), while the latter is a variable factor ; so the mean struck today cannot be the same as the mean struck tomorrow. Tomorrow our capacity to suffer, our perseverance, our courage, may increase, and we may approach nearer our ideal than today. So instead of putting too much emphasis upon the *attainable* middle-ideal, Gandhiji rather believes that we should always keep in our mind's eye, the *highest* goal, and, at the same time, concentrate upon the means of giving it a shape under existing conditions. The attainable ideal will vary from time to time ; but if we always concentrate on the means and not on the fruits thereof, we shall succeed in bringing heaven down to earth in a much better fashion than by any other means.

This appears to be the chief distinction between Gandhiji and, say, Jawaharlal, who believes in a clear statement of the attainable middle-ideal as a necessary condition in the fight for freedom. It is necessary, according to Jawaharlal, in order to bring hope to the people, to inspire them to fight. An unattainable ideal, he would say, leaves people in a sick frame of mind when they go on distressing over their own weakness. But Gandhiji thinks otherwise. Therefore he wrote to Jawaharlal, in 1933 :

"Though you have emphasised the necessity of a clear statement of the goal, having once determined it, I have never attached importance to its repetition. The clearest possible definition of the goal and its appreciation would fail to take us there, if we do not know and utilize the means of achieving it. I have, therefore, concerned myself principally with the conservation of the means and their progressive use. I know if we can take care of them the attainment of the goal is assured. I feel too that our progress towards the goal will be in exact proportion to the purity of our means.

"The method may appear to be long, perhaps too long, but I am convinced that it is the shortest." (*Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 17. 9. 33.)

"I have not dealt with the questions of the ideal constitution as you alone can be its fashioners. My duty lies in discovering and employing means by which the nation may evolve the strength to enforce its will. When once the nation is conscious of its strength it will find its own or make it." (*Young India*, 8.1.25.)

"Political power means capacity to regulate national life through national representatives. If national life becomes so perfect as to become self-regulated, no representation becomes necessary. There is then a state of enlightened anarchy. In such a state everyone is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour. In the ideal state therefore there is no political power because there is no state. But the ideal is never fully realised in life. Hence the classical statement of Thoreau that that government is best which governs the least." (*Young India*, 2.7.31.)

This with regard to political affairs. In the economic sphere, too, he bears the same character in his ideals. His idealism is not blind to the failings of human nature ; but he sticks to it because he believes that this is the way of highest attainment.

"If all laboured for their bread and no more, then there would be enough food and enough leisure for all.*

"This may be an unattainable ideal. But we need not, therefore, cease to strive for it. Even if without fulfilling the whole law of sacrifice, that is the law of our being, we performed physical labour enough for our daily bread, we should go a long way toward the ideal.

"If we did so, our wants would be minimized, our food would be simple. We should then eat to live, not live to eat. Let any one who doubts the accuracy of this proposition try to sweat for his bread, he will derive the greatest relief from the productions of his labour, improve his health and discover that many things he took were superfluous.

"May not men earn their bread by intellectual labour ? No. The needs of the body must be supplied by the body. *Render unto Cæsar that which is Cæsar's* perhaps applies here well." (*Harijan*, 29.6.35.)

In an interview given in 1934, Gandhiji perhaps made the position of his economic and political idealism clearer than anywhere else.

Question. "Is love or non-violence compatible with possession or exploitation in any shape or form ? If possession and non-violence cannot go together then do you advocate the maintenance of private ownership of land and factories as an unavoidable evil which will continue so long as individuals are not ripe or educated enough to do without it ? If it be such

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* For a fuller statement of the ideal, see page 314 of the present issue.

a step, would it not be better to own all the land through the State and place the State under the control of the masses ?"

Answer. "Love and exclusive possession can never go together. Theoretically, when there is perfect love, there must be perfect non-possession.

"Those who own money now, are asked to behave like trustees holding their riches on behalf of the poor. You may say that trusteeship is a legal fiction. But if people meditate over it constantly and try to act up to it, then life on earth would be governed far more by love than it is at present. Absolute trusteeship is an abstraction like Euclid's definition of a point, and is equally unattainable. But if we strive for it, we shall be able to go further in realizing a state of equality on earth than by any other method." (*Modern Review*, October, 1935.)

He has clearly stated : "To degrade or cheapen an ideal for our convenience is to practise untruth and to lower ourselves. To understand an ideal and then to make a Herculean effort to reach it, no matter how difficult it is, that is *purushartha*, manly endeavour." (*From Yeravda Mandir*, p. 25.)

"Having ascertained the law of our being, we must set about reducing it to practice to the extent of our capacity and no further. That is the middle way." (*Young India*, 5. 2. 25.)

"No man is expected to do more than he can." (*Harijan* 24. 9. 38.)

This does not however mean that he fondly cherishes any false hopes regarding human nature :

"It is true that I have often been let down. Many have deceived me and many have been found wanting. But I do not repent of my association with them. For I know how to non-cooperate, as I know how to co-operate. The most practical, the most dignified way of going on in the world is to take people at their word, when you have no positive reason to the contrary." (*Young India*, 26. 12. 24.)

This shows why he clings to the highest ideals even when he recognises fully the limitations of human nature. His idealism is like the determined idealism of one who was like a cynic in the estimation of human nature, but who has succeeded in conquering back his faith in humanity. It is not the faith of an ideal dreamer who knows nothing of the world ; he holds on to the highest ideal because he believes this is the way of highest attainment. That is why we agree with his remarkable statement made as early as 1920 :

"I am not a visionary. I claim to be a practical idealist." (*Young India*, 11. 8. 20.)

UNITY OF THE GANDHIAN WAY*

J. B. Kripalani

GANDHIJI has elaborated no philosophical system of life, logical and complete in itself. Yet all the socio-political plans and activities advocated by him are organically correlated and integrated. They are based upon certain fundamental principles and a unity runs through them all. They can neither be cut off from their basic principles nor from each other. In the former case they will be snapped from their living roots and, drying up in course of time, will degenerate into inert, lifeless custom. At the same time if the basic principles are accepted and the practical schemes of reform rejected and no substitutes in the light of those principles supplied, the principles will be reduced to empty forms without any substance or content. Again, if the practical schemes are worked piecemeal and in isolation, without either co-ordination or correlation, they will lack vitality and the principle of growth.

Recently at a meeting of the A. I. C. C. a radical politician said that a distinction should be made between the creed and the programme of the Congress. According to him there should be no censorship of belief in the creed, if the programme is accepted and worked out. Such a view, which separates the creed from the programme, betrays ignorance of the historical evolution of the Congress in recent times and the place of Gandhiji and his ideology in it. It makes of the Congress a purely political organisation for the liberation of the country from foreign domination, and deprives our movement of its comprehensive revolutionary character. It transforms the struggle into a war of independence, although non-violent. It makes it revolutionary in the narrow and not in the comprehensive sense, that the policy and the programme are based upon a distinct ideology that seeks to change the values of life and usher in a new epoch in history. Such a view implies that the political slavery of India is an isolated phenomena, unrelated or at best not fundamentally related to the life of the nation. Such was the view of earlier Congressmen. They had therefore made it a part of the constitution that the Congress as an organisation did not concern itself with social reform, being purely and exclusively a political body. In those days it was possible to combine political

* This article will form a chapter in the author's forthcoming book on "Basic Education", to be published by the Hindustani Talimi Sangha.

The author, better known as Acharya Kripalani, is the General Secretary of the Indian National Congress.—*Ed.*

radicalism with social reactionarism. Many so-called political extremists of the time were very moderate or even reactionary in their social outlook. On the other hand, many political moderates were radicals in matters social. This was due to life being divided into watertight compartments. It was also due to the fact that the political doctors had not properly diagnosed the real malady from which the country was suffering. The disease was rooted not in the mere accidental loss of political liberty, as may happen to any otherwise healthy nation by a combination of adverse circumstances, but in the enfeeblement of the life-spirit of the nation. Its symptoms were visible not only in political dependence but in a moral, spiritual and all-round decadence. If the nation was therefore to be saved it could not be done merely by the transference of political power, however important that may be. Whatever the nature of the struggle, violent or non-violent, it must be based upon an ideology, a revaluation of life-values. Such a movement would have its spiritual and idealistic aspect. Such was the French Revolution and is the present Bolshevic Revolution, in contrast to the successful movements of liberation from foreign yoke in many modern countries, like Netherlands, America, Italy and others. In the former case not only politics but the entire life of the group is affected and transformed and a new epoch begins.

It is such a spiritual revolution that Gandhiji has been trying to work through the Congress. As he works through this organisation he has often to accept its limitations. He takes it as far as its origin and historic evolution would allow. But the effort always is to make the Congress the vessel of this all-round transformation.

If such a change is to be effected, the nation may not accept the programme and reject the creed ; the two are intimately and organically connected. Neither may the nation accept one item of the programme and reject another at its sweet will. The different items are parts of one organic whole. Often our politicians have accepted the programme but sought to run away from the full implications of the creed. They have taken refuge behind the plea that the Congress has described its creed as *peaceful and legitimate* and not *non-violent and truthful* ; as if peaceful means can ever be violent and falsehood can ever be legitimate.

However, here we are not concerned with what portion of Gandhiji's ideas the Congress has accepted but with what Gandhiji's ideology stands for. We are considering his philosophy of life, social and individual. In that there can be no divorce between the creed and the programme, for the programme is evolved out of the creed. Often we are asked, what place have *charkha*, *khadi*, village industries, untouchability, etc., in a political revolution? Did not countries which had no such programmes attain liberation from foreign domination? It was not necessary for the U.S.A. to give up slavery

to drive away the British. Neither did the Netherlands give up the Black Trade to free itself from Spain. Why should there be removal of untouchability and the emancipation of women ? Did not women in the past work under many handicaps when national liberty was achieved ? Do they not still suffer from many disabilities under democratic national governments ? These are logical arguments. Nevertheless a struggle that seeks to remain non-military and non-violent and eschews untruth and falsehood may not have a double set of moral values, one for social and another for political intercourse. It must therefore first seek to do justice before it can claim the moral right to fight external injustice with weapons of truth and non-violence. Truth and non-violence are not in Gandhiji's schemes mere religious forms or dogmas They have to be woven into the life and activity of the nation. They must be mobilized, organized and disciplined, if they are to be substitutes for armed might. The armies of *Satyagraha* must be trained. They must learn habits of co-operation in order to non-cooperate effectively with evil. Military strategy has its fields of training, in wars of aggression, frontier raids and air bombing, espionage, diplomacy, bluff and bluster. The training-ground for the *Satyagrahi* are the various constructive and the so-called reformist programmes of Gandhiji. If these programmes were not there and they did not train the *Satyagrahis* in discipline, organisation, command and obedience, in short, in all social and civic virtues, a critic like H. G. Wells may have some justification to call non-violence the "principle of the vegetable kingdom." As it is, *Satyagraha* is far more active and dynamic than the principle that rules in the brute world and the jungle. It is therefore that Gandhiji always insists that non-violence is not for the weak and the cowardly but for the brave and the strong. For him it is the most active force in life.

The basic principles therefore may not be separated from the programme. It is, however, possible that the principles of 'truth' and 'non-violence' may work as effectively through other external programmes. Spiritual principles cannot be confined to, or canalized through, one set of external institutions. It is quite possible that a mind as great as or greater than Gandhiji's may embody the principles in different institutions and schemes of reform. But till more suitable methods of canalizing these principles are discovered, suggested and worked out, Gandhiji's programmes of practical work must hold the field.

Not only have the uncritical made a distinction between the creed and the programmes but have often sought artificially to dissociate the latter from each other, and accepted one programme or a part of it and rejected the rest. For instance, many political workers accept *khadi* as the national symbol and uniform ; some accept it as symbolical of simplicity and identi-

fication with the masses. They reject its economic implications. They fail to understand that the essence of *khadi* lies in Gandhiji's conception of economic self-sufficiency for the villager, in two of his primary necessities of life, food and clothing. To fail to understand that *khadi* is introduced as a subsidiary industry for the villager to take away his forced idleness and consequent unemployment for a good part of the year, is to miss its significance in the life of the nation. Remove the basic economic ideas and *khadi* will fail to be the nation's uniform, for long. It will fail to be India's symbol of identification with the masses. Its place may be taken by scythe and hammer, or some symbols as significant in their own way. *Charkha* is on our flag and *khadi* is on our body as the national uniform, because they have meaning and significance in our national economy as conceived by Gandhiji.

Removal of untouchability must also be no mere political weapon. It must be approached in the spirit in which Gandhiji wants it to be approached, in non-violence, truth and justice. If it is tackled merely from the narrow political viewpoint, it may add one more communal problem to the many that already disgrace the land. Hence it is that Gandhiji lays as much stress upon temple-entry and the internal reform of the *harijans* as on the removal of their economic and political disabilities.

Again, the Hindu-Muslim question has to be approached, not as the politicians would have us do, in terms of percentages and quotas, nor even in terms merely of mass contact, measured by the number of Muslim primary members on the Congress register, good as that is. Many of the Mussalmans whom we draw in the Congress lose their caste, however religious and learned they may be. The mass contact that Gandhiji wants is to be evolved by daily and hourly service, rendered by members of the majority community to members of the minority community, in truth and justice, and not in a bargaining political spirit. There are deep-seated and historical causes for distrust and suspicion. These cannot be removed by percentages and pacts, nor even by enrolment as Congress members. If Mussalmans are invited in the Congress only through the door of membership, before their doubts and suspicions are removed, they may in course of time become a problem there, which would be worse than their being a problem outside the organisation. Gandhiji's approach to the problem therefore appears to be the only sane approach to-day and he derives it from his basic principles of non-violence and truth.

Then there are the problems of the *kisans* and the industrial labourers. They may not be solved in the spirit of class-hatred and class-war. When even the greatest conflict of foreign rule we propose to solve with weapons of non-violence and truth, how can we seek to tackle our internal

conflicts with any other weapons ? If we attempt such a solution we shall merely be playing in the hands of the foreigner, economically and politically. It is believed that foreign influence and intervention are at the root of the terrible prolongation of the civil war in Spain. Here the foreign influence in the shape of British Imperialism is much more entrenched than is the case with Spain. The foreigner can therefore very effectively exploit our class-conflicts and passions. The resultant chaos will be a hundred times more terrible and disastrous than in Spain. It is strange that any sensible patriot or lover of humanity should talk in such terms to-day. But the tragedy is that some idealists are so much obsessed with their theories and are so impatient that they count the cost of human misery and suffering as little as did the pious Fathers of the Christian Church in Medieval times when they burnt at the stake witches, heretics and sometimes even unaoubted saints belonging to their own fraternity. The present counterparts of these priests believe that they are saving the soul of humanity from exploitation, capitalism and imperialism, which after all are more destructive than any carnage that may result from restoring the balance. They therefore think that it is cowardly to count the cost in human woe and suffering, even if it involve those whom they would want to save. Who can argue against such Divine Wrath ? Its advocates are often enough as pure in motive as were the Church Fathers. Verily, the way to hell is paved with good intentions. Even so, one may be induced to be more modest about human judgment and consequently less inclined to be violent. After all, if one's judgment happens to be wrong and if one is non-violent, one only injures oneself.

So far then as Gandhiji's scheme of life and reform is concerned the question of *kisans* and the industrial labourers must also be tackled by methods evolved from his basic principles of non-violence, truth and justice. For India, situated as it is today, this is also the most practical and factual approach.

So, as we have shown, not only is there an intimate relation between the creed and the programmes but the programmes are organically interrelated and inter-connected. Nay, the separate items are a unity in themselves. They cannot be dissected or sub-divided arbitrarily and one part accepted and the other part rejected. The programmes are to be accepted in their inter-relation and are not to be cut off from their roots in the basic principles of the creed.

This unity in principles and the unity that runs through his concrete schemes and plans, makes Gandhiji's programme a single whole. It makes of it a complete system of philosophy with its distinct ideology. This ideology is revolutionary in its character. Its dynamic and revolutionary element is often missed by superficial and hostile critics, who are deceived

by the creed of non-violence. Violence is not of the essence of a revolution. What is of the essence are the new values, based upon some principles of life, what the spiritualist calls the eternal verities of life. The word 'eternal', to the modern mind, may sound unscientific. But even the scientific Socialists, the Marxists and Bolshevists, though they may deny the eternal character of non-violence, may not deny that the principles of truth and justice, embodied in whatever changing forms and institutions, are eternal principles and are at the basis of all social intercourse as we know it among humans on this planet.

Given the principles and the programme, what is further necessary for a successful revolution is a dynamic personality who, as it were, is the embodiment of the principles. Revolutions are accomplished neither by the device of counting votes nor by popular fronts, but by straight forging ahead under determined leadership, which counts no cost as too great in the service of the ideal. The fundamental principles with their programmes and personality being given, the theoretical success of a revolution is assured. The practical success will depend upon the combination of a hundred and one favourable circumstances and even accidents and the proper utilization of opportunities that may not repeat themselves.

Gandhiji's sceme of life neither lacks basic principles, nor a programme, nor again the living dynamic personality. It is, perhaps therefore, that however unpractical and out of tune with the times some of his schemes may appear, they have a strange vitality. Revolutions, after all, are not based upon so-called crude facts and reality. The reality that revolutions take account of, is not mere physical external reality. To be effectively real, it must include and embrace imagination, enthusiasm, faith, foresight and many other psychical and moral realities. For instance, what would remain of the Bolshevik revolution if the reality contemplated by Lenin and his followers lacked imagination, fervour, enthusiasm, faith and foresight ?

Gandhiji's is, therefore, a complete revolutionary philosophy based upon facts and reality. No part hangs loose. It is due to this that in spite of its want of theoretical system, it attracts people, fired with missionary zeal and enthusiasm and those whose grasp of reality includes a bright and burning faith and an indomitable will. It is this aspect that the Indian Liberal and the Socialist fail to grasp. The latter is surprised at the vitality that Gandhiji's philosophy manifests and the hold it has upon the masses. Even his apparent want of logic succeeds. Why ? Because Gandhiji is ever ready to sacrifice consistency and formal logic in favour of dynamic and revolutionary logic. The man who once declared that it was a sin to go to the Councils, not only advocated Council-entry but

acceptance of office.* What horrible inconsistency, but what foresight and grasp of the real and the factual! And how quick he is! As soon as the Ministries are installed in their places, he is ready with his schemes—complete prohibition in three years, a brand new scheme of education. The Radicals were not ready with any schemes of their own. They had therefore to fall in line, whatever their views about prohibition and education.

Let the Radicals and Socialists, therefore, once for all realise that it is not ancient worn-out wisdom that they have to oppose, nor is it social and political reaction, nor again it is liberal dilletantism and decadence. What they have to oppose is a revolution, a living and working faith, of which Gandhiji is the embodiment. Let them also know, that they cannot at their sweet will cut off items of programme and graft them on to other ideologies. They cannot have an ounce of non-violence and dilute it with a bucketful of Bolshevism. Such a procedure will not work. It will fail. They cannot, for instance, talk of non-violence and encourage peasant agitation and industrial strife of the Western type, on the specious plea that strife already exists and it is not of their creation. If they really believe in non-violence, even as a policy, they will have to work it out faithfully, uninfluenced by other ideologies which cannot fit in with non-violence. They will have to find points of contact between capital and labour, peasant and landlord, and exhaust all possibilities of peaceful settlement before they can advocate even a non-violent struggle. They cannot have Gandhiji's principles and tack them on to Marxism. The Socialist may not know it, but his advocacy of non-violence always sounds hollow and as something taken up for convenience. Often enough in private conversations and public meetings he is betrayed into advocating or excusing violence. After all, every sane politician admits to-day, that for India the question of violencehas only theoretical importance. Why does it then crop up every now and then in his private and public utterances? Because non-violence does not fit in with the rest of his ideology. Even though he wears *khadi* to make himself politically respectable, that *khadi* sits loose on him. He may not talk of village industries. He can never be enthusiastic about them. He may, for want of a device of his own, accept Basic Education but he will so mutilate it that it will not work. Let him know that such opportunist conformity will not strengthen his own ideology or programme but will be demoralizing, if not for the leaders, surely for the rank and file. Let him also realise that in the world to-day there are

* An even more striking illustration may be found in a comparison of Gandhiji's recent utterances on the struggle for responsible government in the States with his views at the time of the Haripura Congress.—*Ed.*

two distinct ideologies and two revolutionary principles, the one advocated by Gandhiji and the other derived from Marx and worked out by the Bolshevists. These two ideologies are separated by an unbridgeable gulf. They are based upon diametrically opposite moralities and philosophies of life. What is good in one is not so in the other. What is praiseworthy in the one is blameworthy in the other. Gandhiji is a force of progress and peace in the world according to one view. According to the other, he stands for reaction and exploitation of the underdog ; he is a friend of the bourgeois, the capitalist, the zamindar and the Indian princes. It is useless to miss the difference. It does no good to any party to misunderstand the full implication of each other's philosophy. It is all right to talk of unity and popular front. But if a dynamic programme, a revolution of the one sort or the other, has got to be carried out, it cannot be done by divided counsels, differing ideologies, conflicting loyalties and loose organisation.*

Let then every man live up to his faith. Let every party work out its own programme. If there is conflict it is inevitable and unavoidable. After all, if one party is pledged to non-violence, we may not witness the internecine war that raged some time back in China and that rages and tears Spain to-day. Non-violence has evolved a peculiar strategy to meet such situations. In the days of Motilal and Das for sometime the *Satyagrahi* retired from the field of active politics. He took to village work, to *khadi*, to the removal of untouchability. He was willing to bide his time. In the meantime he was not an obstructionist in the path of the Swaraj Party. He helped where he could. Gandhiji was always available to Das and Motilal. So there is no great danger if one ideology is allowed to try its hand at national regeneration, unhampered. After all the aim of Gandhiji and the Marxists is the same, namely, freedom from exploitation of all sorts. The difference arises in the means and the principles of life that each holds by. If there is a conflict let that be a friendly rivalry. But then such rivalry can only be built upon truth and non-violence. Can the Marxists accept the necessary change in their faith ? If they can, they may not after all find much difference between themselves and Gandhiji. They will not only understand and appreciate his programme better but will fall in line with his plans and thus help to introduce in India a Socialism that is wedded to principles of truth and non-violence, which, after all, appear to be more in keeping with the genius of the Indian people than conflict, war and violence. Non-violence and truth are also the greatest need of humanity to-day.

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* This article was written more than two months ago, before the differences between the Congress leaders who accept Gandhiji's creed and leadership *in toto*,, and those who do not (foolishly called by the press "Rightists" and "Leftists") took the form of an open challenge.—*Ed.*

GAṆAPATI

Harides Mitra

Section 10.

BUT the Gaṇeśa figure is far from ugly. On the other hand, Gaṇeśa image is much more than the plastic representation of a mere elephant. For the bodily proportions of Gaṇeśa are those of a human male child, while his expressions are also certainly human and not animal-like.

The Ancients conceived of many mythical forms of life, half-animal, half-human, e.g. the Centaurs and the Satyrs of the Classical Artists, the Avestan sacred dog-bird Semmurv, the Babylonian Winged Bulls, the Egyptian Gods and Goddesses with beast and bird-faces : these and many other animal creations of art and mythology, the Ancients failed to invest with the human interest, with anything more than and above what belongs to the mere animal.

But the Indians, and above all, the Gauḍian artists had made greater advances in their treatment of animal forms and of vegetable life. They humanised their artistic creations.[1] They never brought down Heaven to the earthly level but raised Earth to the heights of Heaven.

For, observe the image of *Naṭa-rāja* Śiva,[2] dancing the dance of cosmic evolution and the attendant figures of Nandin, Bhṛṅgin and of the Bull, etc. The Bull accompanies Śiva with his frantic dances and participates in his master's raptures with the fervour of a thinking human being -- a *Bhakta*. The Bull is, for all practical purposes, more human than animal-like, in expression.

Or, observe the image of Viṣṇu in his *Varāha* incarnation.[3a] It symbolises and visualises the blind fury and the stupendous strength of the animal — boar. But look at his face when he holds the Mother-earth on his elbow *Medinīṁ vāmakūrparē*. It is the face of a husband beaming with joy and even self-conceit, for having been in possession of strength enough to rescue the beloved one from danger (of molestation by the *Nāga-s*). Yet, no athlete in the world would be able to assume such a pose as the Varāha's, which is not unnatural, in any way.

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1. A. K. Maitreya : *Garuḍa, the carrier of Viṣṇu : in Bengal & Java.* In *Rūpam* (The Indian Society of Oriental Art, Cal.) No. 1, p. 5.

2. See Section 9. Note 1. *Supra.*

3a. A. K. Maitreya : *Studies in the Sculpture of Bengal.* In *Modern Review,* (Cal , 1923) pp. 478 ff.

Again, look at the athletic pose of Garuḍa in his usual *Vīrāsana*, his breast filled with breath and his up-lifted upper body about to soar high, yet feeling the weight of Viṣṇu.[3b] The whole is the picture of a person absolutely self-controlled yet wielding superhuman power, of a *Bhakta* who according to the Vaiṣṇava-s is sometimes even superior to his Lord and Master. It is much more than the picture of an animal, or of a human being.

Lastly, observe the figure of Gaṇeśa. We see in his face beaming with joy in the act of taking sweetmeats, fruits, and sugarcanes, the exact reflection of the happy smile of a simple child enjoying its candy *Pheṇika*. We see in his figure the half-helpless and chubby form of a suckling, and also the healthy, over-fed and even sensuous body of a voracious glutton.

On the other hand, we also see in Gaṇeśa the reflection of the animal 'elephant', its flabby body and its tusked upper-part, and above all, its intelligence. The Gaṇeśa image combines the animal and the human elements and yet transcends them all. For Gaṇeśa is the personification of knowledge *Jñāna*, as it were. The *Pāśa* and the *Aṅkuśa*, which really appertain to the elephant-trainer and are Gaṇeśa's *Āyudha-s*, *par excellence*, stand respectively for 'the desires, which cause bondage' and for 'the knowledge which removes it'.[4]

Attention has already been drawn to the bodily proportions of Gaṇeśa. The *Śilpaśāstrakāras* have prescribed for him, with wonderful artistic insight, the proportions which exactly fit in with Gaṇeśa's peculiar form, the proportions of a human male child about five years old.[5]

In the case of small children the *torso* and the head are proportionately much longer, compared to the legs, than in an average full-grown person. For a new-born baby *Śiśu*, the bodily measurements conform to the rare *Ardha-catus-tāla*,[6] but these are in the *Pañca-tāla*—for a child in the fifth year,[7] or in the *Ṣaṭ-tāla*—if the child is above five years[8] in age.

There are two standards for measurement of the bodily proportions of Indian images—according to the *Śilpaśāstrakāra-s* viz. the *absolute* and the *relative*.

In the *absolute* standard, the smallest units for measurement, are the almost microscopic particles of dust, which are observable in the solar rays,

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3b. Ditto. : *Op. cit.*, In *Rūpam*, No. 1.

4. See *Post.* Note No. 20.

5. O. C. Ganguly : *South Indian Bronzes.* (The Ind. Soc. Orient. Art., 1915) p. 37

6. G. N. Rao : *Indian Iconometry. A. S. I. Memoir*, No. 3.

7. B. K. Sarkar : *The Śukranīti.* (Translated from Ed. of G. Oppert). *The Sacred Books of the Hindus.* (Allahabad, 1914) Vol. XIII. Chapt. IV, Sect. IV, *śls.* 183, 336—61, 366—78.

8. *Pratimā-Māna-Lakṣaṇam. Viśvabhāratī* Ms., No. 2713.

when a small pencil of light is admitted through a small chink of the window.[9] The highest working unit in general use among the Artists and prescribed in the *Śilpa* treatises, is the *Tāla* and the smallest working unit[10] is the *Aṅgula* ; though bigger[11] and smaller units[12] are also used if necessary.

In the *relative* standard, the desired height of the image is divided into nine equal parts , each of which being further sub-divided into eight smaller parts, would give a *svāṅgulam* [13] or a *deho-palabdha-mānāṅguli*[14] when the height is measured in the image-maker's or the Donor *Yajamāna's* own hands.

Regarding the artistic excellence and merit of Gaṇeśa Image, the Western critics, not to speak of laymen without expert knowledge, have, however, great divergences of opinion.

While some regard Gaṇeśa as a grotesque creation of idolators,[15] as

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9. Varāhamihira . *Bṛhat Saṁhitā*. Chapt. 58, *śl.* 1.

10. For, there are in actual use, such terms as—*Matrāṅguli-s*, *Māmāṅgula-s*, *Māpanāṅgulika-s*.

11. *Pratimā-Māna-Lakṣaṇam*. *Viśvabhāratī* Ms., No. 2718

12. B. K. Sarkar : *Op. cit.* (Allahabad, 1914) Chap. IV, Sect. IV, *śls.* 169—70.

13. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa : *Śrī-Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*. (Dacca, 1802 B. S.) *Vilāsa* 18.

14. G N. Rao : *Indian Iconometry*. *A. S I. Memoir*, No. 3 ; also, O. C. Ganguly : *South Indian Bronzes*. (Ind. Soc. Orient. Art, 1915) *Tāla and Aṅgula*, pp. 33-34.

15. E. Permentier : *B. E. F.*, *Tome* XIX. (1919) No. 7, 62.

"That we should be incapable of judging of the faith of another race appears to me, besides, very proved by the interpretation Mr. Havell gives to the powerful figure of the Indian Gaṇeça in the grotesque. Any real spirit of the comic that is met with in certain Indian sculptures, it is in my opinion an error to seek here, as well as (E. B. Havell—*Indian Sculpture and Painting*. 1908, p. 85) to find in Gaṇeça the ready contrast of the human and by the way infantile sagacity opposed to the divine sagacity of Śiva, to see in his bulky body a body of infant (p. 51). It is the massive body of a big man that is called forth by the huge neck of the head of elephant and the form of feet which are most often of elephant also. Perhaps more simply this great human form is simply brought in by the idea of the elephant linked to that of Gaṇeça. The majority of the *Cam* and *Javanese* Gaṇeças—and they are numerous, awaken none of the comic impression, but rather of a real majesty, for the little that could be made out of this weird composition and most certainly in the case of the Gaṇeça of Singasari . . . the purpose sought for is far from being gay : it suffices to note the bed of heads of corpse on which is seated the deity, their repetition in his ornaments and even in the tissue of his *Sarong*. The only comic (element) is involuntary, it does not attach to most certainly the peculiar idealism of the figure : it is the failure of observation of these heads of corpse that had made of it ridiculous playthings. They are no less in certain statues of Nepal which are looked at with horror, and attain on the contrary very well in the traits themselves of the divinity." (Translation from the French.)

The Gaṇeśa Image from Bara is not true, according to the view of O. C. Ganguly, either to the character of the Polynesian Art, or, the Indian Art. It has neither the striking *Decorative character* of the first, nor, the *Idealism* of the latter. See O. C. Ganguly : *The Cult of Agastya*. (In *Rūpam* Soc. Orient Art. Cal. No. 25, p 14 Ind.)

an anomaly, others look upon him more favourably,[16] and the general opinion vary between these two extremes.

The explanations of the characteristic ornaments and bodily poses, etc. of Gaṇeśa, are practically identical with those of the particular form of Śiva representing *Ākāśa Tattva*, and are elsewhere given (in my Monograph on *Sadā-Śiva*).[17] Taken in themselves (*i. e.* without reference to any symbolic meanings) the gestures and positions have undoubted Artistic and Therapeutic (Medical) values.

The *Nāṭykśāstrakāras* (Teachers of Dramatic Arts) Bharata, Kohala and Nandikeśvara, and the *Śilpaśāstrakāras* (Teachers of Manual Arts) Viśva-Karmā, Kāśyapa and Maya have fully developed the purely Artistic side.[18]

The Therapeutic (Mystic Psycho-physiological) values of positions and gestures (in helping to control the mind more effectively, and so forth) are also fully recognised.[19]

But, not only, the *Mudrās*, the *Āsanas* but especially the *Āyudhas* and the *Varṇas* possess innner and mystic significances,[20] without which the many apparently contradictory elements in Deities, would be inexplicable. The evolution of the conceptions of such highly poetical and deep inner significances, is undoubtedly the work of men of superior intellect. Such conceptions could not be borrowed from outside or from the primitive animistic aborigines.

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16. Karl With : '*Animals*'. (Translated from the German.) In *Broom-An International Magazine of the Arts.* (Editor, Harold A. Loeb. Rome) Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 99.

"The strange symbolism of the "*Ganesha*" representations is rather difficult for us to understand. His animal is the elephant, expressing spiritual powers, and embodiment of primitive, earth-born wisdom, full of earthly secrets and their projection in soul and phallus. From an artistic point of view, these figures of "*Ganesha*" reach the greatest harmony of curved forms in the sculpture of India ; they are the mightiest "rondo-bosse" presentations of plastic elements. A connection between the *Nandi* and *Ganesha* symbolism, and astrology can be surmised ; the elephant having been consecrated to the East, and the bull to the West, the basis of this being the sun's course and the relation of sun and earth."

17. Haridas Mitra : *Sadāśiva Worship in Early Bengal : A study in History, Art and Religion. J. P. A. S. B. (N. S.)*, Vol. XXIX. 1933, No. 1.

18. See *Catalogue of Oriental Manuscript Library.* Madras, Vol. XXII ; Haridas Mitra : *An Introduction to the Devatāmūrtiprakaraṅam. Cal. Skt. Series*, No. XII. Ch. 2, 3 —On the Canons of Indian Art.

19. *Haṭha-yōga-pradīpikā.* Chapter III. (*Śrīveṅkaṭeśvara* Pr., Bombay).

20. *Vāmakeśvara Tantram. Nityaṣoḍaśikārṇavam.* (*Ānanda. Skt. Series.*) *Viśrāma* V, *śls.* 41, 42 ; A. Avalon : *Tantra of the Great Liberation* (*Mahanirvāṇa Tantram*) pp. xxiv &

THE RISE OF THE BAHĀ'Ī FAITH IN IRAN

Prof. Pritam Singh, M.A.

IT is interesting to study the rise of a great religious movement in an Eastern Land. The movement has now attached importance and is spreading in many countries. The Iranians, in particular, should take a genuine pride in the fact that their country has been chosen as the dawning point of this new faith. Like the people of Israel who gave birth to Moses and to Christ, the Iranians have given us the Bāb, Bahā'u'llah and Abdul Bahā, and the birth of these three was to guide not only them, but was to be of enduring significance for the whole human race of today. The future of this Faith lies in the unification not only of faiths, but of nations and of races also.

It was in the year 1844 A.D. that a young and handsome Shirazi by the name of Syed Ali Mohammed the Bāb, for the first time drew the attention of the Islamic world to the dawn of a new Dispensation. He proclaimed himself to be the *gate* of knowledge, or the Bāb, and he captivated the hearts of many by his remarkable beauty of appearance and by his wonderful eloquence. He threw a challenge to the people of Islam by saying that the revelation of the prophet was not final and that the appointed time for that dispensation was at an end and that the New Day was about to dawn ; and that he was there to prepare the way for the Promised One of all the Nations and that "He Whom God will Manifest" was to be on earth shortly.

His claim which was openly made at Mecca, the heart of Islam, and then repeated in Shiraz, his home, was like a bolt from the blue to the orthodox Shia Moslems of Iran. In his time some remarkable Divines of the Shaikhy Sect (who were expecting the arrival of such a Manifestation) accepted the view of this young Shirazi and became what are now known as Bābīs, i.e. the followers of the Bāb.

The majority, however, rejected his claim and not only rejected it, but attempted to stifle the truth and extinguish the light which had begun to illumine the hearts of many. Finding the task hopeless, they began to persecute. The persecution of the Bābīs is perhaps unparalleled in the history of religion. No less than 20,000 are said to have been tortured and killed, among them being women and children also. Their heroic sufferings and their blood laid the foundation of Bābīsm deeper than the persecutors imagined at the time. The Church of God is always built on the

rock of the blood of martyrs and if that be the test, the Iranians have secured the new life of spirit at an enormous cost to themselves ; but they have laid the foundations of that life deep and strong.

Ali Mohammed the Bāb was separated from his young and newly married wife, and was taken as a prisoner and as an exile from place to place and the governors of Fars in alliance with the clergy of Iran did all they could to stop the spread of this new idea. The Bāb was dubbed as the enemy of Islam ; he was tortured, but he would not recant. He was not allowed to see any one or to talk to any one ; his claim was ridiculed ; he was called names ; was bastinadoed ; and was taken in chains from Maku to Tabrez and from there to Cherique and back to Tabrez. His application for an interview with the Shah of Iran was cleverly postponed by the Minister and he could not see the Shah. He was in Ispahan for a little while and was given secret protection by the Governor of that place, whose sympathies were with his Cause. At last in 1850, he was sent to meet his death at Tabrez, after an annoying persecution of six years.

Among his followers was Tahirih, the pure, or Qurrat-ul-Ayne, whose name has become immortalized as she was not only a disciple, but a poetess as well. In compliance with the teachings of the Bāb, she gave up the veil and preached the mission of her Master in the streets of Iran. She met her martyrdom only two years later, but her name as a Bābī poetess is known throughout the length and breadth of Iran. Her poems are remarkable and show the greatness of her culture and the influence of the Bāb on her ideals.

The Bāb had eighteen distinguished disciples and they were known as points or *Haruf*, i.e. "Letters of the Living." After Bāb's death, one of his followers, who thought the shooting of the Bāb was sanctioned by the Shah of Persia, attempted the life of the Shah, but without success. All the followers were hunted down like wild beasts and were either imprisoned or executed. Bahā'u'llah, the son of a Minister of the Shah, was also implicated, as he had accepted the Bāb. His trial ended in his being declared not guilty, since the attempt on the life of the Shah was the act of an individual, who had no accomplices. But he was imprisoned in Tehran for four months. At last he was let off, but orders for his exile to Baghdad were given in the hope that the Bābī influence would be entirely rooted out from Iran.

Bahā'u'llah was an exile in Baghded for twelve long years. True to his light, he went on pushing the Bābī Cause in Baghdad. His learned discourses to the Arabs and the Persians in Baghdad are a remarkable testimony of the breadth of his vision and are revelations of Truth. Meanwhile Bahā'u'llah's activities and influence among the followers of the Bāb

in Baghdad came to the notice of the Turkish rulers of that time. The Mohammedans of Mesopotamia made a common cause with the anti-Bābīs, who were mostly Persians residing in Mesopotamia, with a view to crush this influence. Several plots were hatched, but they did not succeed. At last, however, the Turkish Governor in alliance with the clergy succeeded in persuading the Sultan of Turkey to deport Bahā'u'llah and his followers to Constantinople, the capital of the Turkish Empire, so that the cause of the Bāb may be crushed at the stronghold of Islamic political power.

It may be noted here, that out of the twelve years' stay in Baghdad, Bahā'u'llah had spent two years in seclusion in the Sulomanie hills of Kurdistan. His seclusion prepared him for launching forth his future plans of hastening the dawn of which the Bāb had written and foreshadowed in his writings. These plans matured for ten long years and they were finally given a shape at the time when he and his followers were about to leave Baghdad i.e in the year 1864 A.D. In the garden of Rizwan near Baghdad, Bahā'u'llah gave out to his followers, that he was the one to whom the Bāb had been pointing, and the time had come when, "He Whom God will Manifest", was to make the declaration in clear and unequivocal terms. He took upon himself the title of Bahā'u'llah (or the Glory of God), and under that name he was known to his Bābī followers.

From 1864 onwards till 1893, the life of Bahā'u'llah is one of imprisonment and exile in Constantinople, and finally in Acca (Acre) in Palestine. The members of his family and his followers, numbering in all about seventy-two spent long years in exile and imprisonment. From the prison walls of Acca went forth the message of peace and good will for mankind and the words of this great Prophet of the 19th Century reverberated to all parts of the known world. "Stone walls do not a prison make," for ideas can escape from a prison and produce a thrill and a joy in the responding hearts of men. It is not surprising therefore, to find Bahā'īs in Iran (though the founder was an exile almost all his life), in South America and North America, in Palestine and in Syia, in Mesopotamia, in India, Burma and Japan and in England, Germany and France.

Prof. E. G. Browne of Cambridge who visited Persia and Acca to enable him to write the history of this faith (see *Episode of the Bāb*) in the introduction to that book describes Bahā'u'llah as follows :—

"In the corner where the Divan met the walls, sat a wonderous and venerable figure, crowned with a felt head dress of the kind called Taj by darveshes (but of usual height and make, round the base of which was wound a small white turban). The face of him on whom I gazed, I can never forget, though I cannot describe it. Those piercing eyes seemed to read one's very soul ; power and authority sat on that ample brow, while the deep lines

on the forehead and face implied an age which the jet black hair and beard flowing down in indistinguishable luxurience almost to the waist seemed to belie. No need to ask in whese presence I stood, as I bowed myself before one who is the object of a devotion and love which kings might envy and emperors sigh for in vain. A mild dignified voice bade me be seated and then continued : 'Praise be to God, that thou hast attained . . . . Thou hast come to see a prisoner and an exile. We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations ; yet they deem us a stirrer up of strife and sedition worthy of bondage and banishment. That all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers ; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened, that diversity of religion should cease, and differences of race annulled—what harm is there in this ? Yet so it shall be ; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away and the Most Great Peace shall come. Do you not in Europe need this also ? Is not this that which Lord Christ foretold ? Yet we see your kings and rulers lavishing their treasures more freely on means for the destruction of the human race than on that which would conduce to the happiness of mankind. These strifes and this bloodshed and discord must cease, and all men be as one kindred and one family. Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country, let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind.' "

To form an idea of the place of the Bahāī Faith in the future programme of religion for the humanity of today, let me quote the words of the author of a book on Bahāīsm, namely, Skrine, an Indian civilian who writes to say :

"Bahāīsm will not increase the multitude of sects whose conflict once deluged Christendom with blood and is now discrediting the cause of true religion. It is eclectic, embodying bedrock principles and held in common by every creed. It is a purifying force and frees the gold of truth from quartzite masses of superstition. Bahāīsm has no priesthood, for sacerdotalism engenders the spirit of caste and a struggle for mastery between secular and spiritual powers. It lays no stress on metaphysical dogma or ritual which is their material clothing. Women are nearer the spirit of life than man ; when they attain the higher consciousness, it confers a sort of consecration on them. Both sexes are teachers and scholars according to the degree of soul culture which each individual has attained. Bahāīsm recommends monogamy, its ideal is wedded pair combining the intellectual and emotional attributes of either sex for their own advancement and that of the race. Warfare and commercialism are hideous survivals of the forest-dwelling era."

Again at another place he remarks ; "Bahā'u'llah's writings are pregnant with idealism. His religion is one of joy, of work and social service."

I would refer the reader to the writings of this wonderful revealer of truth and the conviction will come home to him, that Bahā'u'llah was from God and his message was for the welfare of the human race of today. He passed away in the prison of Acre (Acca) in 1892 A. D., after an illness of nineteen days, at the ripe old age of 75, and left the mantle of his great message on the shoulders of his son Abbās Effendi, also known as Abdul Bahā.

Abdul Bahā was only eight years old when his father was living as an exile in Baghdad. For forty years this third leader of the Bahāī Faith was an exile or a prisoner like his father. In 1908 when a constitutional Government was set up in Turkey, Abdul Bahā was released from the prison and a few years later he went about the continents of Europe and America for a period of three years (1911-13), expounding the teachings of Bahā'u'-llah to the people of the West. The accounts of Abdul Bahā's travels have been published in Iranian by the late Mirza Mahmmad Zarghani and are now being rendered into English. His talks in New York, in London and in Paris have already been published in English. Some years ago he was moving and living in our midst and ceaselessly writing and corresponding in Turkish, Arabic and Persian with his followers in different parts of the world. The tablets or letters and epistles sent to his followers have been collected and translated in English by the American Bahāī Publishing Committee, and are available in one volume under the name of "Bahāī Scriptures." After the passing away of Abdul Bahā in 1921, an International House of Justice is being established which will spread the Bahāī Message in different parts of the world. This House of Justice is in the course of formation under the able Guardianship of Shoghi Effendi, the grandson of Abdul Bahā. The present Head Quarters of the movement are at Haifa, which is a rising port near Acre.

If the nations and the peoples of today were to listen to this great message and to this new invitation to the Kingdom of Heaven, they would surely be blessed. As one reads through the lives and the teachings of the Bāb, Bahā'u'llah and Abdul Bahā, one finds that they could not have suffered martyrdom, exile and imprisonment for a Cause less noble than that which they had made their own. That light which was within them could not but show and express itself by a teaching which may not please the orthodox or the conservative in matters of religion, but to every student and lover of truth and of knowledge, their teachings bring home in the strongest terms the truth of the claim of these remarkable Persian Teachers. A beautiful Bahā'ī House of Worship has been built in Chicago which is symbolical of the teachings of this great Faith.

The objective of this Faith has been summed up in a succint manner by Shoghi Effendi the Guardian :

"Let there be no misgivings as to the animating purpose of the world-wide Law of Bahā'u' llah. Far from aiming at the subversion of the existing foundations of society, it seeks to broaden its basis, to remould its institutions in a manner consonant with the needs of an ever-changing world. It can conflict with no legitimate alliances, nor can it undermine essential loyalties. Its purpose is neither to stifle the flame of a sane and intelligent patriotism in men's hearts, nor to abolish the system of national autonomy, so essential if the evils of excessive centralisation are to be avoided. It does not ignore, nor does it attempt to suppress, the diversity of ethnical origins, of climate, of history, of language and tradition, of thought and habit, that differentiate the peoples and nations of the world. It calls for a wider loyalty, for a larger aspiration than any that has yet animated the human race."

PEACE THROUGH EDUCATION

Dr. Maria Montessori

EDUCATION in these critical times has an importance that cannot be over-estimated. It must become the "armament" on which the people can depend for security and progress. I am not discussing the value of material armaments ; I am not talking politics ; all I say is that the true defence of the people cannot rest upon arms. For one war succeeds another, and victory never assures the peace or prosperity of any one ; nor can anything do so until we make use of this great "armament for peace" which is education.

But for education to have its full value for the salvation of man and of civilisation it must not remain so narrow and limited as it is today. Education lags behind the needs of the times and must be reconstructed with haste and energy. Clearly an education that will bring about peace cannot consist merely of those measures that keep the child away from every suggestion of war ; which never give him toy soldiers ; which avoid the study of history as a succession of wars, and try not to suggest that victory in battle is the supreme honour. This negative training will not be enough.

Equally inadequate is the education that tries to make the child love and respect all things—living and inanimate—so that he will then have a respect for human life and for the works of art and monuments that men have set up through the centuries of civilisation. It is only too clear that wars are *not* influenced by such education. What has been the result of the instruction in sociology and politics that have for centuries proclaimed as sacred the lives and liberties of men ? . . . And what of those religions that for thousands of years have done their best to teach men to love one another ?

For men do not go to war because they are blood-thirsty or longing to use their weapons. Men do not make war because it was suggested to them in childhood by a toy. And one must admit that the memorisation of dates and events in history is hardly calculated to inflame martial passions ! The causes of war are more complicated than that.

What we have to recognise is that mankind is bewildered by developments of widespread importance with which education has never dealt. Men do not know what are the forces that draw them into war, and therefore they are absolutely helpless against them. Society has evolved only on the material side, in this field powerful and complicated mechanisms have

been built up, and in these modern man, still ignorant of the mind and incapable of co-operation, is helplessly caught.

Yes, the nations of today are disunited ; they are made up of individuals who are all thinking of their own immediate welfare. The education of today actually *trains* people to remain isolated by their own personal interests. Pupils are taught not to help one another, not to make any suggestion to one who is puzzled, to think only of getting moved up from class to class, and of winning a prize in competition with the others. And these poor little egoists, mentally tired, as experimental psychology has shown, find themselves at last, side by side, in the world. Like the grains of sand in the desert each is dried up and separated from his neighbour, and, if a strong wind blows up, this human dust that has no animating spirit within it will be swept away in a storm, devastating everything before it.

The education that can save men is not a small undertaking. It must include the development of man's spiritual powers and of a harmonious and self-confident personality. Now that production is improved by science and has become well organised in the world, we ought equally to regard human energies as of scientific importance and to organise men. He who has been able to master the cosmic forces that travel through the ether must come to understand that the fire of genius, the power of intelligence, the guidance of conscience, are also energies to be organised, to be disciplined, to be given an effective place in the social life of man. These energies today are dissipated and wasted, or worse, they are repressed and forced into abnormal manifestations by the errors of education that still hold sway in the world. The child is misunderstood by the adult ; parents unconsciously fight against their children instead of aiding them in their divine mission. Parent and child misunderstand one another ; a cloud comes between father and son at the very beginning of life. And throughout childhood it is misunderstanding that makes a child sullen or rebellious, neurotic or stupid, for all these faults are foreign to his true nature. It is misunderstanding between child and adult that causes those tragedies of the human heart that result in callousness, idleness and crime. Man's whole nature is spoiled and wasted.

In our experience with children we have seen that the child is a "spiritual embryo," able to evolve by itself and to give us actual proof of the existence of a better type of humanity. The child has shown us facts that cannot be disputed about the real nature of *normal* human character. We have seen children who, when they were given a suitable environment, changed completely. Instead of wishing to possess anything that caught their eye, of clamouring for it, of quarrelling with other children for it, only to damage and discard it when they obtained it, they were perfectly content to observe everything, to wait for an opportunity to use any object that

interested them, to handle it carefully and return it to its place. Clumsiness and noisiness ceased ; they seemed to take great delight in moving about and performing their tasks with quietness and precision. In place of jealousy, aggressiveness, sullenness, and disobedience, they showed only friendliness and willing co-operation to each other and to adults. They worked with perseverance and without fatigue ; indeed, the work they did seemed to add to their energy.

These children we have seen ; they are both a hope and a promise for humanity. We constructed an environment that contained all things necessary for the life of the little child. The child has not thanked us, but he has revealed a treasure that was hidden in the soul of man. Let us go on then, and create an environment for the older child and the adolescent, for there is very little provision made for them today.

Education must appreciate the value of those hidden instincts which guide men in the work of constructing himself. Now there is one of these that is very powerful, it is the social instinct. We have found that if the child and the adolescent are deprived of social experience they do not develop a sense of order and morality. Then they have to accept order and morals in the form of submission and slavery instead of in their true form of nobility and freedom. Now it is for us to cultivate man, and for this purpose we must prepare for infancy, childhood and youth the suitable environments that will allow them to have these formative experiences. In the first years of life it is the furnished house, later on it is the external world. At the age of seven the child begins to feel the need to go out from the home and the school, to see the world and make new friends, to lead the hard and simple life of camp, to submit voluntarily to a stricter discipline, to face new difficulties and overcome them. These are the social experiences that will satisfy the needs of his developing personality, and if it is impossible to obtain them in the family it is still more impossible where every spontaneous activity is checked and regulated by arbitrary authority as it is in the ordinary school. As has been attempted by the Boy Scouts, we must organise to give children the opportunity to explore the world.

But the adolescent can no longer be satisfied with exploration. He wishes to master his environment, to become a worker, to earn money and be independent. He does not need new friends, he wants to become a citizen, a member of great associations. So during his education he should be allowed to have these experiences, to live away from his family and to do a certain amount of real work, to take part in production and exchange, and to realise his responsibilities to society.

Those nations which today are seeking war have not forgotten the children and young people ; they have given them a position of importance.

They have organised them and made of them an active social force. This is the right method, and it is a terrible misfortune that so far it has only been adopted by those who are pursuing a warlike policy. Those who want war are preparing their youth for war, but those who want peace abandon their infancy and childhood in the sense that they do not organise it for peace.

TWO LAMAIST PANTHEONS

A NEW WORK ON TIBETAN ICONOGRAPHY

George Roerich

TIBETOLOGISTS and students of Buddhist Art and Iconography will be grateful to Professor Walter E. Clark for editing two most useful Tibetan Buddhist Pantheons, discovered in Peiping by the late Baron A. von Stael-Holstein, the eminent Russian indologist.* The work is an outstanding contribution in the field of Tibetan iconography and supplements the already well-known collections of *sNar-than* and the so-called Pantheon of the *lCaṅ-skya Xutugtu Rol-pa'i rDo-rje* (*Lalitavajra*) which was edited by Dr. S. d'Oldenburg in the Bibliotheca Buddhica (volume V of the Series, St. Petersburg, 1903) and described by E. Pander and Albert Gruenwedel in "Das Pantheon des Tschangtscha Hutuktu" (Veroeffentlichungen aus dem Kgl. Museum fuer Voelkerkunde in Berlin, I, 1/2, 1890), and in "Das Lamaistische Pantheon" (Zeitschrift fuer Ethnologie, 1889).† The present publication gives a complete reproduction of 766 bronze images preserved in the *Pao-hsiang Lou* Temple, situated in the garden of the *Tz'u-ning* Palace (built in 1652/3) in the Forbidden City of Peiping, and of a series of 360 images of a manuscript entitled *Chu Fo P'u-sa Sheng Hsiang Tsan*, now in the National Library of Peiping. Baron A. von Stael-Holstein expressed the opinion that the Pantheon of the *Chu Fo P'u-sa Sheng Hsiang Tsan* was prepared for the Second *lCaṅ-skya Rin-po-che Lalitavajra*, and indeed this Pantheon has many points in common with the Pantheon edited by Oldenburg (See A. von Stael-Holstein: "Remarks on the *Chu Fo P'u-sa Sheng Hsiang Tsan*", Bulletin of the Metropolitan Library, vol. I, Peiping, 1928). The Editor of the Pantheon has taken great care in restoring the Sanskrit names, and the Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan Indexes

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* Walter Eugene Clark: *Two Lamaist Pantheons*, Vol. I—Introduction and Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan Indexes, pp. XXIV, 1-169; Vol. II-Plates, pp. 1-314. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1937.

† *lCaṅ-skya thams-cad mkhyen-pa Rol-pa'i rDo-rje* or the Second *lCaṅ-skya Rin-po-che Ye-śes bstan-pa'i sgron-me*, 1717-1786, who by order of the Emperor *Ch'ien-lung* supervised about 1742/3 a translation of the Tibetan *bsTan-'gyur* into Mongolian. The *lCaṅ-skya* Lamas are considered to be reincarnations of *Śākya-Ye-śes* (born in 1354, died in Peiping in 1435), a disciple of *Tsoṅ-kha-pa*. Their original seat (*gdan-sa*) was the *dGon-luṅ* Monastery in North Amdo in the North East of Tibet. Until the present Sino-Japanese War, their usual residence was in Peiping.

form a useful appendix. A few of the names are doubtful and this has been noted by the Editor, but in general the reconstructions are very accurate.

The bronze images found in the *Pao-hsiang Lou* Temple bear on their pedestals inscriptions in Chinese, which greatly help the identification of the deities represented. These bronze images are the work of that school of craftsmen, which flourished in the XVII-XVIII-th centuries in Peiping, *Wu-T'ai Shan* (*Ri-bo rTse-lṅa* in the Shan-hsi Province), and *Dolōn-nūr* (or Lama Miao in Chakhar in Inner Mongolia), and which still produces bronze images of mediocre craftsmanship, so unlike the eighteenth century masterpieces.

The 360 images of the Lamaist Pantheon contained in the *Chu Fo P'u-sa Sheng Hsiang Tsan* are arranged into groups, as is usually the case in such collections. First come the *sṅon-gyi mkhan-po-rnams* (*pūrva -upādhyāyāḥ*) or "Teachers of the Past", beginning with Nāgārjuna (*kLu-sgrub*) and ending with Śākyaprabha (*Śākya-'od*), the chief expounders of the Vijñānavāda and of the Mādhyamika-Prāsaṅgika school, whose dialectical method was adopted by the *dGe-lugs-pa* school of Tibet. The founder of the Prāsaṅgika school Buddhapālita (*Saṅs-rgyas-skyoṅ . . . bskyaṅs*) is however not included among the "Teachers of the Past". Then come the principal *mahāsiddhas* (*grub-chen*), adepts of the Vajrayāna (*rDo-rje theg-pa*) : Saraha, Tilopa, Nāropā and others. Next we find the founders of the *bKa'-gdams-pa* school Atīśa (982-1054) and his disciple *'Brom-ston-pa* (1004-1065), the founder of the *dGe-lugs-pa* school *Tsoṅ-kha-pa* (1357-1419) and his two chief disciples *rGyal-tshab-rje* (*Dar-ma Rin-chen*, 1364-1432) and *mKhas-grub-rje* (*dGe-legs dPal-bzaṅ*, 1385-1438), *dGe-'dun-grub*, the First Dalai Lama (1391-1475), the First *Paṇ-chen bLa-ma bLo-bzaṅ Chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan* (1571-1663), the Great Fifth Dalai Lama *ṅag-dbaṅ bLo-bzaṅ rgya-mtsho* (*Kun-gzigs lṅa-pa chen-po*, 1617-1682), the Third *Paṇ-chen bLa-ma bLo-bzaṅ dPal-Idan Ye-śes* (1740-1780), and the Seventh Dalai Lama *sKal-bzaṅ-rgya-mtsho* (1708-1758). The Tibetan teachers included in such Pantheons are usually those, who wrote most on the methods of invocation and meditation on various deities. Such were the First *Paṇ-chen bLa-ma bLo-bzaṅ Chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan* and the Great Fifth Dalai Lama who was deeply interested in the *rṅiṅ-ma* Tantras and in whose time the various propitiating and invocation rites assumed an elaborate form.

The next group of the Pantheon consists of the *bla-med lha-rnams*, that is deities belonging to the *Anuttara-yoga-tantra* system in their *yab-yum* aspect, beginning with the presiding Tantric form of *Vajradhara* (*rDo-rje-'chaṅ*). The *Anuttara-yoga-tantra* system in its turn consists of several systems, connected with the worship of various *yi-dam* (*iṣṭa-devatā*), such

as *Kālacakra* (*Dus-'khor*), *Guhyasamāja* (*gSaṅ-'dus*), *Śrī-Cakrasaṃvara* (*dpal-'khor-lo sdom-pa*), *He-ruka* (*Kye-rDo-rje*), *Bhairava* (*'Jigs-byed*) and others. Deities, having as their attributes (*phyag-mtshan*) the trident (*triśūla, khaṭwaṅga, rtse-gsum*), the cup made of human skull (*kapāla, thod-khrag*) and a human head (*mi-mgo'i phyor-ba*), also belong to the *Anuttara-yoga* system. It is interesting to observe that images of deities of the *Anuttara-yoga* system are not to be found on frescoes dating back to the period preceding the persecution of Buddhism by *gLaṅ Dar-ma* (838/9-841). Throughout the so-called "early" period preceding to the IX-th century one finds only images of deities belonging to the "lower" Tantric systems (*rGyud-sde 'og-ma*), such as the *kriyā-tantra* (*bya-ba'i rgyud*), *caryā-tantra* (*spyod-rgyud*), and the *yoga-tantra* (*rnal-'byor rgyud*). This often helps to establish the date of Tibetan frescoes. The introduction of the *Anuttara-yoga* system into Tibet met with considerable opposition, thus we are told in the *Pad-ma'i dKar-po'i chos-'byuṅ*, p. 103b (of the Bhutanese edition), that the translation of Tantras belonging to this system was forbidden by order of king *Khri-sroṅ lde-btsan* (804/5-814).

The next group of the Pantheon is composed of the five Dhyāni-Buddhas (of the "lower" Tantra system), of the thirty-five Buddhas of Confession (*ltuṅ-bśags-kyi saṅs-rgyas*), of several Tathāgatas, of the Buddhas of the Past Ages, of Bhaiṣajyaguru (*sMan-bla*) and others. Then come the eight Bodhisattvas (*ñe-ba'i sras chen brgyad*) in their various aspects, the various forms of the goddess Tārā and other deities of the "lower" Tantric systems.

The next group consists of the sixteen great Arhats arranged according to the Tibetan List, supported by the the Upāsaka Dharmatala and the Upāsaka Hwa-śaṅ, and the chief disciples Ānanda and Mahākaśyapa.

The last group of the Pantheon is formed of the various deities which are usually classified by the Tibetans into one large group of "Protectors of the Doctrine" (*bsTan-bsruṅs*). This group includes the *dKar-po brgyad-bcu* of the *bKa'-gdams-pa* school, among whom we find the Four Guardian Kings of the Cardinal Points (*rGyal-po chen-po bźi*), several of the female deities belonging to the *bKa'-gdams sgrol-ma bcu-gñis* class and other *dei minores* of the Lamaist Pantheon.

It would be most instructive to make a comparative iconographic study of the existing Lamaist Pantheons and to attempt to explain their symbology according to the various philosophical religious schools. The available material for such a study is considerable. The principal religious schools of Tibet (*dGe-lugs-pa, bKa'-gdams-pa, bKa'-brgyud-pa, Sa-skya-pa, rñiṅ-ma-pa*) each possess their rules of meditation on the various divinities or *sādhanas* (*sgrub-thabs*) which form the main source

of our knowledge. Some schools possess large collections of such *sādhanas*, for example the *sGrub-thabs rgya-mtsho* of the *Sa-skya-pa* school. To this must be added the numerous *khrid-yig* or commentaries composed by various authors and which often contain accurate iconographic descriptions, prayers or *smon-lam*, which frequently include descriptions of deities and their retinue or *parivāra* (*'khor*), as well as the so-called *tshags-par* or "transfers" with the help of which the Tibetan artist draws the images (See G. Roerich : Tibetan Paintings, Paris, 1925, p. 17). It must be also added that there exist numerous methods or styles (*lugs* in Tibetan) of representing a particular deity. For example the *mGon-po Phyag-bẓi-pa* (No. 306 of the Pantheon) is also often called *mGon-po sde-lṅa*, because of five different methods or *lugs* of representing this particular Protecting deity : *kLu-sgrub-lugs* (Nāgārjuna's method), *ẓi-ba sbas-pa'i* lugs (Śāntigupta's method), *Phag-gru lugs* (*Phag-me gru-pa* was the founder of the *gDan-sa mthil* Monastery), *ẓaṅ-lugs* (*ẓaṅ-rGyal-ba'i yon-tan's* method) and the *Yon-tan 'Phrin-las lugs* or method. The *mGon-po Phyag-bẓ'i-pa* (*Caturbhuja-Mahākāla*) is represented in No. 306 (p. 301) holding the curved knife or *kartrikā* (*gri-gug*), the *kapāla* (*thod-khrag*), the sword or *asi* (*ral-gri*), and the banner (*rgyal-mtshan*). There exists also another form of this deity in which the deity is represented holding instead of the curved knife or *gri-gug* the *'Be-ta* fruit (*'be-ta'i 'bras-bu*), and instead of the banner the trident or *rtse-gsum* (No. 243 of the Pantheon edited by E. Pander is represented holding the *'Be-ta* fruit, the cup (*thod-khrag*), the sword and the trident. This seems to be the correct form of representing this deity. No. 243 in the edition of Oldenburg holds the knife, the cup, the sword and what appears to be a combination of trident and banner. His *śakti* or *yum* is represented on p. 307 (No. 330—*Candikā-devī*) holding the bow and arrow (*mda'-gẓu*) and the knife and trident. Sometimes she is also represented holding a human head (*mi-mgo*). (See Oldenburg, No. 244.) The goddess belongs to the *bKa'-gdams sgrol-ma bcu-gñis* class.

Gur-gyi mgon-po represented on No. 305 (p. 301) is not a form of *Mahākāla*. He is the *yi-dam* of the *Sa-skya-pa* school and is often called the "Leader of the Protectors of the Doctrine" (*bsTan-bsruṅs rgya-mtsho'i sde-dpon*). His other name is *rDo-rje-gur*. According to some authors he has a *parivāra* or retinue of eight deities, according to others his retinue consists of twelve deities.

Each of the images in the Pantheon of the *Chu Fo-P'u-sa Sheng Hsiang Tsan* bears the name of the deity inscribed in Chinese, Manchu, Mongol and Tibetan. The spelling of the Tibetan names is not always correct, which shows that the images must have been the work of a Chinese artist not very familiar with the Tibetan script.

REVIEWS

POLITICS IN PRE-MOGHUL TIMES : by Dr. Ishwara Topa. Published by Kitabistan, Allahabad.

THIS thoughtful little book is a study in political psychology of the early Turki Kings in India upto the end of the fourteenth century. The subject is unfamiliar to the general reader. The average student of Indian History pays but scant attention to political development in this country prior to the advent of the Moghuls. He visualises vaguely a panorama of adventurous hordes from Central Asia, zealots in their outlook, marauders by character, breaking through the north-western passes and spreading death and disaster over this land. The figure of the fanatic, sword in one hand and the Koran in the other, predominates this picture. A long-drawn and bloody struggle culminating in the victory of the fiery foreign iconoclast over the mild indigenous idolator, but both protagonists too primitive and uncultured to have any conception of civil administration, this is the idea that has been sedulously propagated by a long line of historians, not necessarily dishonest, and on which generations of Indian students have been fed to the detriment of their larger national interest.

Historical research has, however, taken a healthier turn of late. It is now realized that India, like every other country in the world, has had a long period of political and cultural evolution, and that it is meaningless, from the point of view of political growth, to divide that period into a series of water-tight compartments. Each age, in succession, has contributed its quota to the whole structure that forms the glorious heritage of the Indian of today. To ignore this is to lose one's perspective and to flounder in the morass of communal, provincial and racial prejudices. It is to this band of earnest research workers that Dr. Topa belongs, and his selection of a comparatively obscure and less known period of history as his subject only indicates that he is not a man who would be daunted by the difficulty of the task before him.

Even a cursory reading of the book under review will convince one of the amount of hard work that the author has put into it. Numerous original books and documents bearing on this subject have been laboriously examined and sifted, general principles of political science applied to them and final inferences drawn therefrom with the greatest of care. It is quite possible to admire the diligence of Dr. Topa without agreeing with all his conclusions. If in one or two matters he has been carried away by his enthusiasm, it is

easy enough to overlook that fact in view of the immense amount of useful work he has turned out.

The author rightly remarks in his Preface that the success or failure of these early rulers in tackling the problems of kingship and statecraft cannot be judged by our modern standards of politics, that the only criterion that can be applied to them and their work is their own age with its peculiar standards and values. It should also be remembered that in appraising the political conception underlying any old oriental kingdom, the narrow western view of a state is of little use. There is no magic attaching to a particular set of political terms, phrases and slogans. Different peoples have tried to solve the problem of human happiness in different ways, and it is essential that in studying political philosophy, especially with regard to a country like India, we should take as broad a view of politics as is possible.

The Tukri Kings were the makers of the Mediaeval history of India. Their political psychology is an important factor in the evolution of Indian history as a whole. Historical research based on religious or racial bias is fatal to our realisation of a common fatherland with a common historical heritage. Dr. Topa has made this abundantly clear in his book. He has shown how one Sultan after another adjusted his relationship with the Ulema and with his subjects, both Muslim and Hindu. We shall go over the ground covered by him very briefly for the benefit of the general reader.

The first chapter relates to the early Arab raiders and to their comparatively primitive mentality. The second is entitled "From Raids to Kingship," and deals with the gradual rise of a Muslim state in India. Of Mahmud, ruler of Ghazni, the author says ; "he seems to have been devoid of a higher conception of politics . . . his whole life was devoted to political exploits indicative of territorial aggrandisement," but without his having the capacity of cementing his conquest into a great empire. By the end of the tenth century, the Prophet's ideal of a theocratic state had decayed considerably all over the Islamic world, and religion played no important role in the political make-up of the Ghaznavide State." What was Mahmud's attitude towards the idol-worshipper ? He undoubtedly led several raids into India, and plundered individuals as well as temples. But there was nothing of the fanatical propagandist about him. According to Elphinstone, he did not convert a single Hindu, nor did he put any person to death for the sake of his conscience. Among his trusted generals there were several Hindus whom he freely employed in warfare in Central Asia. As a Muslim writer says : "If he harassed the Hindu Rajas of India he did not spare the Muslim sovereigns of Iran and Transoxiana." The Ghaznavides were, after a century of supremacy, supplanted by the Ghoris. Muhammad,

the Ghori conqueror, was no mere raider. He let loose new political forces that led in time to the establishment of a Muslim State within the limits of India. No doubt, like his forerunners, he made a pretence of waging a Holy War, but his real motive was always acquisition of wealth and annexation of territories. The difference between Mahmud and the Ghori King was that the latter knew very well how to consolidate the territories conquered by him. But even in his time there was no separate Muslim Kingdom in India. The empire consisted of the Ghorian state and its dependencies.

On Muhammad's death his empire collapsed very rapidly. Qutubuddin, his most capable General, who had already been Viceroy in India, was elected Sultan by the Turki nobles and officers. Qutub could not, however, get hold of the Sultanate, but he succeeded in establishing a separate Indo-Muslim Kingdom round about Delhi. During his time and that of his successor, Iltutmish, that Kingdom rapidly grew into an independent state. The personal character of her first two Sultans helped this growth considerably. Once an independent Indian Sultanate was established, the mentality of its rulers underwent a rapid change.

Dr. Topa says : "The political centre automatically shifted from Ghazni to India. Be it mentioned here that in the evolution of the Indo-Muslim Kingship, India captivated the heart, mind and soul of the Muslim rulers. Their problems were not the problems of the Islamic countries. India was their political, social and religious problem. She engrossed their whole attention and thought, with the result that they lost their active interest in the Islamic countries. They were cut asunder from their source of political inspiration. They began to identify themselves wholly with Indian interests which were their own as they Indianized themselves in the course of time."

After the downfall of the third monarch, Sultana Raziya, the kingdom decayed rapidly. There was discontent and confusion everywhere. The prestige of kingship, so assiduously built up by the first two Sultans, was threatened with dissolution. Real power passed into the hands of an influential cabal known as the Forty. Out of this confusion the Sultanate was rescued by Balban, one of the Forty, who seized the throne and assumed absolute dictatorial power.

The evolution of kingship under Balban's iron rule is set forth cogently and in detail in a separate chapter entitled, "Balban's Conception of Kingship and Government." The first duty of the new Sultan was to restore peace, good government and efficiency to the State. He broke the power of the Forty, collected round him a body of honest and God-fearing ministers, devoted to himself, and set about building up his state on a new and firmer footing. He believed in efficiency, but laid a far greater stress on dignity

of behaviour and on a close and intimate contact between ethics and politics. As the author remarks: "Balban's conception of Kingship was not narrow, materialistic and pragmatic. . . . He wished to impose moral limitations on Kingship in order to curb its absolutism." He believed that a tyrant committed infidelity to God and acted against the behests of the Prophet.

Balban was succeeded by his grandson Kaiquobad, who has been stigmatised by historians as a gay debauchee, and not quite without reason. But, as a matter of fact, he was as cultured and refined as he was gay and luxurious. And what is more, he wanted his Amirs and his people to be happy and gay like himself. Though he left the details of administration to his chief minister, he kept the helm of State in his own hands and saw that his people were happy and prosperous. That he succeeded largely in this, is testified to by no less an authority than Ibn Batuta. Dr. Topa is perfectly right in inferring that, during the rule of this refined and luxurious monarch, kingship was broad-based on the loyalty of a happy and contented people. It is also worthy of note that in the time of this generous king considerable progress was made in the assimilation of the Hindu element into the body politic.

The conception of monarchy underwent further transformation in the reign of the two Khilji kings who followed Kaiquobad. The first, Jalaluddin, was a usurper with a powerful faction opposed to him. In his own interest, he had to conciliate the people at large. Like Kaiquobad, he cultivated a great deal of geniality, and humanised the institution of monarchy. But, unlike that monarch, he always stressed the ethical basis of Kingship. Genial and kind, but just and equitable,—was the keynote of his reign.

The second, Allauddin, never bothered his head about sympathy, loyalty and attachment. He was a self-willed man, and held that the King was all-in-all in the state. A creature of impulses, he never gave a moment's thought to the future of his vast kingdom, based entirely on the power of the sword. And right enough, on his death, his domain crashed in the midst of factious internecine strife.

The three succeeding kings of note were Ghiasuddin, Muhammad and Firoz, all of the Tughlak dynasty. Ghiasuddin was elected Sultan by the nobles in the midst of the turmoil ensuing on Allauddin's death. He was a man of vast political experience, and knew the value of a throne broad-based on the loyalty of the people. To him Kingship "signified an active but benevolent power. He worked it in alignment with the public opinion. . . . Justice and beneficience were the watch words of his Kingship."

In the reign of Muhammad, the Ulema or the body of orthodox divines began to find their place in the scheme of things. In Dr. Topa's words "the basic idea in the theory of *l'etat, c'est moi*, found its culmination

in the kingship of Muhammad, though it was tinctured with his own Islamic concept. He was after full political power, undefined and unlimited." The Ulema, therefore, could not make much headway and the Sultan ruled as an absolute monarch, whimsical and eccentric in character. Dr. Topa thinks that Muhammad was at heart a well wisher of the people, but it is hard to draw such an inference from his conduct. His mad schemes of world conquest depleted the treasury and brought the Kingdom to the verge of ruin.

In the midst of persistent Moghul inroads and serious internal trouble Muhammad suddenly died. The nobles of the state met together and elected his nephew, Firoz, to the throne. The Ulema supported this election on the ground of divine approval. Firoz accepted the nomination after a certain amount of hesitation. But once he was firmly seated on the throne, he proceeded to mould the state according to his ideals. He saw the futility of basing the prestige of the king on brute force. "The Firozian state was Islamic in its ideal and practice, but the welfare of the people was its prime concern. It regulated the affairs of the people from the Islamic standpoint and abrogated all despotic laws under which the people groaned. These were deemed un- and anti-Islamic." Very probably it was in this reign that the Jizyah tax was first levied. Dr. Topa deals at length with the psychology behind this imposition. To us the point appears of very little importance. If, as late as the nineteenth century, England could treat her Catholics and Nonconformists as she did, what is there so unreasonable or strange in the imposition of Jizyah by Firoz six centuries earlier ? What is important is that it was conceded by Firoz that the state had no right to interfere with the religious life of the Hindus, who were held to be Zimmis, entitled to its protection and patronage.

This finishes our cursory resumé of the contents of the book under review. In connection with the question of the Hindu's position in the Afghan regime we would like to cite the instance of the famous Raja Ganesh who, in the middle of the fourteenth century, sat on the throne of the Sultan of Bengal for seven years with the full concurrence of the Afghan nobility. Not only this, but Ganesh's family, after turning Mussalman, occupied the throne for nearly seven decades without any opposition from the Amirs or the army officers. The political conception of a state must have made a great deal of progress before such a thing, so inconsistent with racial and communal prejudice, could have happened.

Dr. Topa's treatment of the whole subject is so well-balanced and so thorough, that we cannot but express an earnest desire that he should keep to this line of research and take up next the Moghul period for his consideration.

A word about the language of the book. One does not expect a high literary style from a research worker in political philosophy. But lucidity is an essential quality. We would have preferred a simpler and more direct mode of expression, more easily comprehensible to the average reader.

C. C. Dutt.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF RELIGIONS : by Sophia Wadia (International Book House, Bombay).

MOST of those who aim at a synthesis of religions either reduce them to a few homilies and deliberately overlook the traditional and inspirational differences, or enlarge upon one particular religion, naively asserting that it contains all the others so far as man's real needs are concerned. Oversimplification or specious propaganda thus leave unsolved our basic difficulties, while advocates indulge in platitudes and special pleading. There is a third type of unifier who approaches the whole problem historically and intellectually but whose honest labour leads to no fundamental enlightenment, simply because so much of religious experience lies beyond mere reason: the rational approach remains indispensable in so far as it can serve.

Madame Sophia Wadia's book is remarkable because it avoids these three methods and proceeds directly from a profoundly personal testimony of spiritual realities. The intellectual and comparative methods are there but fused in the simple and dynamic quest of an individual saturated in religious thought and traditions: this allows her to criticise, appreciate, discard and accept as she treads the many paths of religion. There is no attempt to schematise or weigh up the religions against each other ; the author is concerned to record the reactions of a sensitive and sympathetic Journey rather than lay down categorical conclusions. With clarity and charm she guides us through the different systems which have taken root in Indian soil ; the form of lectures seems natural to the informal manner of a guide who is also a companion and chooses, therefore, to share experiences rather than force them on others,

But a traveller must have inwardly arrived in order to offer any real guidance ; in this case, the certitude derives from an avowed faith in Theosophy which, however, is never allowed to impinge on the examination of religions by an external standard of values. Even those who might not fully follow the author in the faith which is clearly enunciated in special sections would have no difficulty in sharing her wise and beneficent approach.

The dangerline for a student of religion lies in distinguishing between the institutional forms and the intuitions which lie at the centre ; how far

they can be separated or readjusted to each other—here there must come the factor of evolution and faith in it, for both institutions and human consciousness itself yield to laws of growth—needs careful study. For many deeply spiritual minds the way out would seem to lie in the gradual discarding of institutional forms and even of special revelations which though forgotten must surely lie assimilated in the spiritual make-up of man. But whether this view is taken or not, reverence must be there in our dealings with religions, and reverence is the distinguishing feature of this book.

There is also danger in the process of balancing between tolerance and necessary rejection. Religious tolerance might soon end in indiscriminate acceptance of baneful theories and sub-human practices, robbing us of the genuine sense of values that goes with spiritual awareness. Opposed to the extreme of idolatrous acquiescence is the iconoclastic fury which makes an equally bad idol of its own intolerance, so that in either case little is left of the spirit of truth. The thoughtful student following the author's guidance will feel adequately safeguarded against such dangers.

We are grateful that a book like this, full of light and wisdom, appeared at a time when our tormented age is seeking a new integration of humanity.

A reviewer cannot do justice to a book of such scope and significance ; the essential thing is to possess a copy for insightful study and enjoyment. But I would like, before I conclude, to refer to the close sense of environmental realities which informs this great book. The author never forgets that the glory of religion lies in service and it is in action that faith must find its test. In page 92, for instance, the author movingly brings the human sense of conflict—it was in the days of the Hindu-Muslim riot in Bombay in 1932—as a challenge to spiritual endeavour. The chapters on Buddhism are brilliant and the imaginary advent of Buddha in our age, facing fratricide and scientific stupidity, is unforgettable.

Mahatma Gandhi's terse and gracious Foreword suitably introduces this volume to seekers of Truth.

Amiya Chakravarty.

KATHĀ-O-SUR : by Prof. Dhurjatiprasad Mukherjee.
Visva-Bharati Publishing Department,
210 Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.
Price Rs. 2/-.

CRITICISM is a thankless task, and a difficult one too, especially when sought to be applied to critics. If examiners are not supposed to be examinees, should critics be exposed to the fire of criticism ? In the latter case, the secondary critic would have to be master not only of the subject criticised, but of the

principles of good criticism also. And I cannot lay claim to one or the other qualification.

All I can claim is a love of music in general, an old acquaintance with the songs of Rabindranath in particular, a modicum of common sense, let us hope,—and a sincere desire to understand the writer's point of view.

To begin at the beginning, one of the main principles laid down by Sj. Mukherjee,—and I am sure we shall all agree with him—is that criticism proper should be broad-based on knowledge and history, and not merely pinned on to personal likes and dislikes. I must say the author himself has loyally followed this wise precept ; and in the introduction has given us a broad outline of the musical conditions prevailing throughout India about a quarter of a century ago ; which I consider to be one of the most interesting parts of the book, the Bengali portion of which I seem to recognise and feel at home in. Incidentally it shows his wide knowledge and correct information regarding things musical. Of course there are certain minor mistakes, such as his alluding to the well-known *surbāhār* player of Gobordanga as *Girija Babu*, the elder, when it should be *Ganoda Babu* the younger brother. But slight inaccuracies like this are surely pardonable in such a comprehensive survey.

I also like the masterly way in which he has sketched, among other things, the different classes of song cultivated in different provinces, and how the instruments naturally followed suit ; the distinction in musical evolution between the India of the States and British India ; and the distinctive contributions of Poet Rabindranath and Pandit Bhatkhande in the domain of Indian music.

When one thinks of the vast field he has had to traverse, both in point of space and time, not to mention persons and things,—and the various aspects of music he has had to co-ordinate and string into historical sequence, —one cannot but admire the patience, the research work and grasp of essentials shown in these dozen or more pages, and the time and thought devoted to this labour of love.

It is for this reason that we have often thought it is high time cultured amateurs should come forward and poach on the hitherto closely-guarded preserves of professional *ostads*, in order to let in fresh air and throw new light on the subject of Indian music.

"Opinions" is the heading of the first paper, and in it the author admits that he is writing about music in order to clarify his own ideas thereon. He proceeds to classify the various opinions as to what constitutes a song ;—and I think he inclines towards the one that a good song means neither verse set to music, nor music set to verse, but a happy combination of the two, that gives rise to a third and distinct kind of enjoyment, or *rasa*.

After this the writer has meandered off into a lengthy dissertation on music and singing in general, into the uncharted maze of which I do not think it necessary to follow him.

The author begins the next or second chapter by stating categorically that his object is to define the place of Rabindranath in the history of Hindu music. If this be so, then this is the most important chapter of the book, closely followed by the next two. In all three the writer has developed his main theme in various ways : by showing the gradual evolution of Rabindric songs from the initial orthodox to the latest heterodox phase, and how he infused new life into the dry bones of classical music by means of folk-tunes ; by describing the environment of the poet, which inevitably influenced his style of composition, making him incline to the *dhrupad* to the exclusion of the *khayal* type ; and so on. All of which are true to life.

There are many interesting side lights thrown, which enhance the value of these papers ; such as the historical outline of Hindu music proper, and the rules regulating the pronunciation of the Bengali language, etc. The whole book may be summed up as an *apologia* for the music of Rabindranath, and the writer may be styled a self-appointed counsel for defending it against the onslaught of those bigoted *virtuosi*, who believe that orthodox Hindu music has said the last word on the subject, and anybody who presumes to say anything further is an outcast and a heathen. The counsel's arguments may also be summed up as trying to prove that Hindu music was never a stagnant pool, but a running stream that has always enriched itself by absorbing fresh currents, and has followed a course of historical evolution, like everything else that wants to live ; also that as society and social needs change and develop, so must the arts adjust themselves to the changing spirit of the times. And Rabindranath has accomplished wonders in adapting his music to this changing age, without destroying what is best in the permanent background and atmosphere of his own country.

The author waxes specially eloquent in the last chapter over the dance-drama Chitrangada,* which he considers to be an event in the artistic world, and in which, he says, the dance has come into its own, shaking itself free from the bondage of words and music.

The penultimate chapter, "Kathā-o-Sur" has given its title to the book, and speaks for itself, though not very clearly perhaps to unaccustomed ears. I must confess I find it rather difficult to follow the author when

---

* The musical version of the famous Bengali drama of Rabindranath Tagore, which was staged in Calcutta in 1936 by the students and artists of Santiniketan.—*Ed.*

he indulges in his favourite pastime of roaming freely from 'ology to 'ology, and of dissecting the human mind. After all, music is a matter more for aural demonstration than analytic exposition ; though it may be only natural for a cultivated mind to try and establish through reason what it has already grasped through intuition.

However, I will not end on a grumbling note ; so let me repeat what I began by saying, which is that the wide and varied culture of the writer is apparent on every page ; and we should be thankful for his bold and successful attempt to assess on an historical and broad-minded basis, a school of music which has undoubtedly found favour with a large section of music-lovers, in spite of being looked askance at by a certain class of professionals and their followers.

I can safely prophesy that any one interested in the subject will find much valuable and interesting information in this book, and much food for thought about Hindu music in general and Rabindric music in particular.

Indira Devi Chaudhurani.

WHAT WAS THE ORIGINAL GOSPEL IN 'BUDDHISM' ?

by Mrs. Rhys Davids, D. Litt., M. A.

The Epworth Press, London, 3*s*. 6*d*. net.

MRS. Rhys Davids, is a reputed scholar and author of many works on Buddhism. She has been studying the Pali Literature for many years in order to discover a true solution for the vexed problem of original Buddhism. In the book under review, she has presented some, for me, astounding results of her latest researches, most probably as a final solution of the problem. The Founder of Buddhism was, after becoming enlightened, inspired by an urge from the Unseen to teach Dhamma, hence he formed a determined will to make known that message which was again vitally and intensely concerned with man's will. It was a call to men to up and come to be ; it was a call to grow and will to grow, to choose, to seek salvation (p. 145). This salvation lies in becoming the More. When the Founder denied that the identity of the body and mind with the self, soul, very man, he meant to teach More than that. He never said 'Therefore there is no self.' The self that was denied the identity with the body and self was not that merely human self ; it was the human self who, in the current, the accepted teaching, had undergone a tremendous uplift, a transformation into immanent Godhead (p. 32). So, for her, there is no much difference between the teaching of the Founder and that of the Upanishads. The man anxious to get better results in his self-training is shown as helped by three mandates : (1) that of the self (*attha*) (2) of the worthy on

earth (*loka*) (3) of *dhamma*. Evidence has been made to show a quasi-personal element in *dhamma* (p. 48). In the monkish Buddhism the Ill is over-estimated and the desire under-estimated. But in fact, the very chief thing in the Way (*magga*) was desire the will to become well (p. 59). That will, the effort in the quest towards the goal, was considered in the original Buddhism as the Way or Road. That was the Way of Becoming. The eight-fold Way as found in the Buddhist Literature is a later insertion.

For all the points above summarised, the authoress has ably set forth sound evidences, scriptural as well as contemporary. Now it is left for specialists in future either to lend support to, or to voice protest against, them. I should, however, like to make a special mention of one or two points here. In connection with the eight-fold Way, it is stated on the authority of Mr. A. J. Edmunds that the Way is referred to in Chinese as Just the Way of Purpose, without the other seven parts (68). But no source of reference is given. So far as I know, there *is* mention in Chinese of the eight parts wherever the Way is referred to. See, e. g., Ekottarāgama, sect. 12, Samyuktāgama, sect. 22 and my article in the New Indian Antiquary No. 8. And in the Samyuktāgama there is a section, 24, especially devoted to the explanation of the eight parts.

It is suggested on p. 80 that in the First Utterence there was originally the term *attha* ; the revising editor substituted it by four terms : enlightenment, higher knowledge, calm and *nibbāna*. The suggestion seems to be not plausible one. It has probably been made on the model of passages in the Anguttara (Vol. I, pp. 16-7) and the like, where the terms *anattha* and *attha* are used in contrast. The Vedic *artha* is from the root '*ṛ*' (*arti* and *ṛṇoti*) to reach, to attain, etc. (s. Pali Dictionary, p. 23). Thus its original meaning is 'result', 'profit', 'attainment' and so on. The term *attha*, if at all used, will never specify what that result or profit is. So there was necessity to specify that aim by 'enlightenment,' etc. The Middle Way is certainly understood to be *attha*, since the other two Ways are *anattha*. The argument that it was advisable for the editor to eliminate *attha* originally used by the Founder because of its meaning being restricted to secular affair and business, etc. in the Brahmin culture such as *dharma artha* . . . and Arthaśāstra, is hardly tenable. In the Brahminical Literature the term was never confined to that meaning alone. Note, for example, *artha* in Jaimini's Mīmāmsāsūtra I, 1, 2, and the Bhāṣya thereon. The book is carefully printed and well got up.

N. Aiyaswami Sastri.

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Volume II—Part I (Revised Edition) :

WE welcome thankfully this volume from the India Office Library. It forms the Catalogue of Sanskrit and Prakrit Books,—section I comprising works whose titles run from A to G in the alphabatical order. The remaining works under this section will, as announced in the Preface, cover three more volumes registering altogether upwards of 26,000 separate works and editions. The present volume is a revised edition of its forerunner, with *Addenda* and *Corrigenda*, bringing the lists up to the date of publication. A cursory look at the manner in which the catalogue has been prepared will show the careful labour that has been spent on the task. The special feature of this edition is the cross-references from authors given along with the main works, and in the same order. The Preface furnishes further information relating to the contents of the catalogue, which will be of use to those who would like to consult it for easy references. It is hoped the revised edition of the remaining volumes on the section will come out in no distant time. P. B. Adhikary.

PRATYABHIJNAHRDAYA OF KSEMARAJA

(with English translation and notes by Kurt F. Leidecker, M. A., Ph. D.) Published by the Adyar Library, pp. XX, 213.

THE above book is a welcome addition to the Kashmir Saivaite Literature. The translation and notes are said to be based on the same in German by Rev. Emil Baer, Ph. D. The authorities of the Adyar Library have done well by including in it the Sanskrit original of the Prtyabhijñāhṛdaya. The text is not merely a reproduction of the same published under the auspices of the Kashmir State, but it has been carefully collated with the 3 South Indian manuscripts and one printed book in Telugu script. So the Sanskrit text together with different readings of the collated copies on pp. 163-200 represents the South Indian version of the text. Prof S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri of Madras University has prefixed to it a paper on the Pratyabhijñā system of Kashmir and Śaiva Siddhānta of South India. He has clearly shown there the main points of difference and agreement between these two systems. A brief sketch of the Pratyabhijñā system is also presented in his Introduction by the Translator along with some other details regarding the authorship and date of the composition. The foot-notes appended to the translation are informative and valuable.

The Vasanta Press of Adyar deserves our warm praise for the excellent printing and get-up of the book. N. Aiyaswami Sastri.

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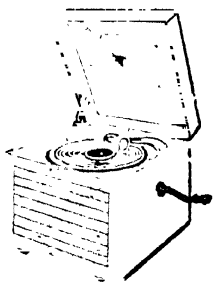

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